DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 031 597 08 VT 009 088

By-Purnell, Richard F.; Lesser, Gerald S.
Work-Bound and College-Bound Youth: A Study in Stereotypes. Final Report.
Harvard Univ., Cambridge, Mass. Lab. of Human Development.
Spons Agency-Office of Education (DHEW), Washington, D.C. Div. of Comprehensive and Vocational Education Research.
Bureau No-BR-5-0128
Pub Date Apr 69
Contract-OEC-5-85-017
Note-210p.
EDRS Price MF-$1.00 HC-$10.60
Descriptors-College Bound Students, Comparative Analysis, Comprehensive High Schools, Educational Attitudes, Educational Environment, Educational Sociology, *Educational Status Comparison, Foreign Students, National Surveys, *Noncollege Preparatory Students, Parent Attitudes, Questionnaires, Self Concept, Stereotypes, *Student Attitudes, Values, *Vocational Education, Vocational High Schools
Identifiers-Denmark

Stereotypes about work-bound youth in vocational and comprehensive high schools were examined, using the students' own perceptions of on-going experiences in these two types of schools. Essentially two related stereotypes account for the wide-spread misconception about vocational and comprehensive high schools: (1) Vocational schools are seen as a "dumping ground" for lazy students and slow learners, and (2) Comprehensive high school education is seen as superior to vocational high school education for work-bound youth. Data were collected by self-administered questionnaires from 3,060 students (1,981 boys; 1,079 girls) attending six vocational high schools in as many states and from 1,827 students (890 boys; 937 girls) attending three comprehensive high schools in New England states. Also data were collected from 2,331 Danish vocational students in 14 schools in order to make comparisons with American vocational students. The findings of the study do not support the "dumping-ground" stereotype for this sample of specialized vocational high school students. Also, the findings suggest that American specialized vocational high school students fare as well in their views of themselves and of the education they are receiving as Danish vocational students who live in a country where vocational education is not considered degrading. (CH)

ED031597

BR-5-0128
PA-08
OE-BR

(C1)

FINAL REPORT

Contract No. OE-5-85-017

WORK-BOUND AND COLLEGE-BOUND YOUTH: A STUDY IN STEREOTYPES

April, 1969

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education
Division of Comprehensive and Vocational
Education Research

VT009088

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF HEALTH, EDUCATION & WELFARE
OFFICE OF EDUCATION

THIS DOCUMENT HAS BEEN REPRODUCED EXACTLY AS RECEIVED FROM THE PERSON OR ORGANIZATION ORIGINATING IT. POINTS OF VIEW OR OPINIONS STATED DO NOT NECESSARILY REPRESENT OFFICIAL OFFICE OF EDUCATION POSITION OR POLICY.

Final Report

Contract No. OE-5-85-017

Work-Bound and College-Bound Youth:
A Study in Stereotypes

Richard F. Purnell
Gerald S. Lesser

Laboratory of Human Development
Harvard University

Cambridge, Massachusetts

April, 1969

The research reported herein was performed pursuant to a contract with the Office of Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare. Contractors undertaking such projects under Government sponsorship are encouraged to express freely their professional judgment in the conduct of the project. Points of view or opinions stated do not, therefore, necessarily represent official Office of Education position or policy.

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF
HEALTH, EDUCATION, AND WELFARE

Office of Education
Division of Comprehensive and Vocational
Education Research

STAFF

Derek Clawson
Barry Cook
Patricia Otis Cook
John Herzog
Bernard Horowitz
Reimer Jensen
Denise Kandel
Gerald Lesser (Co-Principal Investigator)
Richard Light
Richard Purnell (Co-Principal Investigator)
Joanne Ramagosa
Gail Roberts
Masu Sasajima
Hans Weltzer

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Reimer Jensen and Hans Weltzer were responsible for the collection of data in Denmark. We are grateful to them and to other cooperating members of the Danish National Institute of Educational Research, the Danish Ministry of Education, and the University of Copenhagen. We are most indebted to the principals ("school inspectors" in Denmark), teachers, parents, and students of the schools in the United States and Denmark. These schools and people will remain anonymous, but their cooperation is appreciated greatly.

Table of Contents

Page

List of Tables vi

Chapter 1: Introduction to the Study 1-1

I. Development of Vocational Education in the United States 1-3

II. Present Structure of Vocational Education in the United States 1-4

A. Definition of Vocational Education 1-4
B. Types of Vocational Programs 1-4
C. Types of Vocational Schools 1-5
D. Extent of Secondary Vocational Education in the United States 1-7
E. Contemporary Issues in Vocational Education 1-7
F. Images and Stereotypes of Vocational Education . . . 1-10

III. Aims of the Study 1-12

Chapter 2: Methodology 2-1

I. Specialized Vocational High Schools 2-1

II. Subjects 2-3

A. Respondents Sampled 2-3
B. Factors Affecting the Samples Selected 2-3
    (1) Type of Community 2-7
    (2) Distribution of Vocational High Schools in the United States 2-10
    (3) Negro Students 2-13
C. Preselection Visitations to Schools 2-13
D. Vocational Programs of the High Schools Sampled . . . 2-14
E. Students 2-14
F. Parents 2-24
G. Respondent vs Non-respondent Mothers 2-24

Table of Contents (Cont'd)

Page

Chapter 2 (continued)

III. Questionnaires 2-32

A. Nature of Instruments 2-32
B. Pretests of Items and Questionnaires 2-33
C. Consistency of Student Responses 2-33
D. Accuracy of Student Responses 2-36

IV. Procedures 2-41

Chapter 3: Stereotypes About the Specialized Vocational High School Student 3-1

I. On Becoming a Vocational Student 3-2

II. On Being a Vocational Student 3-8

A. Valuations of Vocational High School Experiences . . 3-8
B. Students' Views of Their Scholastic Performance . . 3-15

III. On Going Beyond Vocational High School 3-19

IV. Summary 3-22

Chapter 4: Stereotypes About Person-Orientation Among Vocational Students 4-1

I. Prevalence of Peer-Orientation Among Vocational Students 4-1

II. Person-Orientation and School Achievement 4-2

III. Person-Orientation and Adolescent Personality 4-5

IV. Person-Orientation and Parents *vs* Peers 4-8

Summary 4-11

V. Parental Views and Aspirations 4-12

Table of Contents (Cont'd)

Page

Chapter 5: Stereotypes Concerning the Value of Education for Work-Bound and College-Bound Youth 5-1

I. Ascribed Status Differences Among Students 5-3

II. Student Experiences in the Various Programs 5-5

A. School Achievement and Satisfaction with School . . . 5-9
B. Involvement in School Activities 5-11
C. Behaviors Outside of School 5-15

III. Student Aspirations in the Various Programs 5-20

IV. Relative Influences of Family on Students in Different Programs 5-27

Summary 5-32

Chapter 6: American and Danish Vocational Students Compared . . 6-1

I. Danish Sample and Educational System 6-1

II. On Becoming a Vocational Student 6-2

III. Satisfaction and Achievement in Vocational School 6-6

IV. Students' Outlooks on Work and Success 6-10

V. Family Influences Among Students 6-12

Summary 6-20

Chapter 7: Summary and Conclusions 7-1

References

Appendix A: Copies of Questionnaires

Appendix B: Letters to Parents

List of Tables

Number	Title	Page
1-1	Federally Aided Vocational Programs in the Secondary Schools by Type of Program	1-8
2-1	U.S. Vocational Student Questionnaire Returns For Each School and For Total Sample	2-4
2-2	U.S. Parent Questionnaire Returns for Each School and For Total Sample	2-5
2-3	U.S. Teacher Questionnaire Returns for Each School and For Total Sample	2-6
2-4	Pseudonyms Assigned to Communities from which Six U.S. Schools Were Selected, Their Geographic Regions, Type of Community, and Population . . .	2-8
2-5	Distribution of the Eninger Study's Population and Sample of Schools by Geographic Region . . .	2-12
2-6	Distribution of U.S. Students in Trade Programs for Each School and for Total Sample	2-15,16
2-7	Percentage of U.S. Students in the Various Occupational Categories Offered in Their Schools	2-17
2-8	Distributions of U.S. Students in Grades at each School by Sex and for Total Sample	2-18
2-9	Distribution of U.S. Students' Ages for each School by Sex and for Total Sample	2-19
2-10	Distribution of U.S. Fathers' Occupations by School and for Total Sample	2-20
2-11	Distribution of U.S. Fathers' Education by School and for Total Sample	2-21
2-12	Distributions of U.S. Students' Responses on Selected Variables by School and for Total Sample	2-22,23
2-13	Distribution of Students (by Sex and Grade) Whose Parents Answered Questionnaire	2-25
2-14	Distribution of U.S. Father's Occupations by School and for Total Sample	2-26

List of Tables
(Cont.)

Number	Title	Page
2-15	Distribution of U.S. Father's Education by School and for Total Sample	2-27
2-16	Distribution of U.S. Mother's Education by School and for Total Sample	2-28
2-17	Distribution of U.S. Parents' Responses on Selected Variables by School and for Total Sample	2-29,30
2-18	Background Characteristics Reported by Students of Respondent and Non-respondent Mothers	2-31
2-19	Percent Consistent Responses by Students to Five Pairs of Items	2-35
2-20	Percentage of Agreements Between Students and Mothers on Four Background Variables	2-37
2-21	Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Students' Responses on Items About Which Predictions Based on Their Orientations Were Made	2-38,39
2-22	Responses of Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Students to What They Think is Important to Strive for While in High School . .	2-40
3-1	Importance of Various Factors that Helped Students Decide to Attend a Vocational High School	3-3
3-2	Persons Who Helped Students Decide What Trade to Study	3-5
3-3	Influential Things that Helped Students Decide What Trade to Study	3-7
3-4	Students' Responses to Items Concerning Their Satisfaction with Vocational High School Experiences	3-10,11
3-5	How Students and Teachers Feel About Specialized *vs*. Regular Vocational High School Training . .	3-13
3-6	Vocational High School Teachers' Satisfaction with Regular High School Teachers' Views of Vocational High Schools	3-14

List of Tables
(Cont.)

Number	Title	Page
3-7	Students' Responses to Items About Their Performances in Vocational High School Settings	3-16,17
3-8	Students' Plans After Vocational High School . . .	3-20
3-9	Students' Response Choices to Three Jobs with Differing Delay of Gratification Requirements .	3-21
4-1	Distributions of Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents by Sex	4-2
4-2	Differences Among Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents on Items Related to School Achievement	4-4
4-3	Differences Among Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents on Items Related to Personality	4-6
4-4	Differences Among Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents on Items Related to Their Parents and Peers	4-9
4-5	Initial and Current Parental Feelings Concerning Vocational High School Attendance of Their Children as Reported by the Students	4-14
4-6	Initial and Current Parental Feelings Regarding Their Child's Attendance of Vocational Instead of Regular High School as Reported by Parents .	4-15
4-7	Parental Experiences with and Opinions of Vocational School Education	4-17
4-8	Mothers' Post-High School Aspirations for Their Children	4-18
5-1	Distribution of Father's Occupation as Reported by Students	5-4
5-2	Distribution of Father's Education as Reported by Students	5-6
5-3	Distribution of Mother's Education as Reported by Students	5-7

List of Tables
(Cont.)

Number	Title	Page
5-4	Distributions on Several Background Variables as Reported by Students	5-8
5-5	Students' Responses to Items About School Achievement and Satisfaction with School	5-10
5-6	Students' Responses to Items About Involvement in School Activities	5-13,14
5-7	Students' Responses to Items About Behaviors Outside of School	5-16,17
5-8	Students' Choices on the Best Way to Get Ahead in Life	5-21
5-9	Students' Preferences in a Job	5-22
5-10	Students' Responses to Finishing High School, Going to College, and Future Orientation	5-24
5-11	Occupational Categories Aspired to in Fifteen Years by Students	5-25
5-12	Occupational Categories Expected in Fifteen Years by Students	5-26
5-13	Students' First Choices on Things to Strive for in High School	5-28
5-14	Students' Responses Regarding Parental Pressure to do Well in School and to go to College	5-30
5-15	Students' Expression of Closeness to Parents . . .	5-31
6-1	Importance of Various Factors that Helped Students Decide to Attend a Vocational High School . . .	6-4
6-2	Persons Who Helped Students Decide Which Trade to Study	6-5
6-3	Students' Responses to Items Concerning Their Satisfaction with Vocational High School Experiences	6-7

List of Tables
(Cont.)

Number	Title	Page
6-4	Students' Responses on the Importance of Good Grades and Time on Homework	6-8
6-5	Students' First Choices on Things to Strive for While in High School	6-9
6-6	Students' Perceptions of Existence of Leading Crowds in Vocational High Schools	6-11
6-7	Students' Preferences in a Job After High School	6-13
6-8	Students' Responses to Three Jobs with Varying Delay of Gratification Requirements	6-14
6-9	Students' Ideas About the Best Way to Get Ahead in Life	6-15
6-10	Students' Responses on Fathers' Occupations . . .	6-16
6-11	Parents' Reactions to Their Children Attending Vocational High School as Reported by Students .	6-18
6-12	Parental Pressure to do Well in School Work	6-19

Chapter 1

Introduction to the Study

The adolescent in the American high school has been studied from numerous perspectives (e.g., Bandura and Walters, 1959; Blos, 1941; Coleman, 1961; Friedenberg, 1959; Gordon, 1957; Havighurst, et al., 1962; Hollingshead, 1949; Kandel, et al., 1968; McDill, et al., 1966; Rothney, 1953; Stinchcombe, 1964; Tannenbaum, 1962; Waller, 1932). However, the failure to differentiate among high school students according to their educational objectives and programs of study has resulted in a mistaken, "averaged" image of them. This misunderstanding of American adolescents stems from two basic omissions. First, vocational high school students are almost entirely ignored in research on American adolescents, leading to distortions about their purposes and experiences. These distortions about vocational students become exaggerated when they are compared, subjectively and unsystematically, with the paragon of American secondary education -- the college-bound student. Second, distorted views of American high school students have resulted from the failure of research to incorporate the fact that students are assigned to or choose different educational tracks that have far-reaching consequences in their differential development. The salient point for research on adolescents is that high school students ought not to be considered as an undifferentiated conglomerate, but that careful distinctions be made in the educational conditions they experience.

Our purpose is to extend and examine a prominent, controversial line of research on adolescents carried out on comprehensive high school students (i.e., Coleman, 1961; Gordon, 1957; McDill, et al., 1966; and Kandel, et al., 1968), by studying vocational high school students and comparing them with comprehensive high school students. Our emphasis, however, is to study the stereotypes of vocational education and most adolescents in vocational education. We examine the stereotypes by describing the vocational student's condition and experience and by comparing his condition and experience with those of American comprehensive high school students and Danish vocational students. Our approach focuses simultaneously on the social structure of the high school, the relative importance of intellectual and other activities for high school students, and the relative influence of the adolescent's family and peer group on his behavior and attitudes.

The most influential work in this area is Coleman's The Adolescent Society (1961). The need to study the vocational student for his own sake emerged from the Kandel, et al. (1968) study, in which the cross-cultural method[1] was applied to investigate the relative roles of the family and the peer group as influences on adolescent behavior. These two emphases -- the use of cross-cultural method and peer vs parent comparisons -- have been retained in the present study of vocationally oriented adolescents.

Emphatically, this study does not purport to address itself directly to all the complex problems facing vocational education in America. We hope, however, to contribute to a clearer understanding of some of these problems as the vocational students experience them. One analysis of these problems appears in The Role of the Secondary Schools in the Preparation of Youth for Employment (Kaufman, et al., 1967), a comprehensive, enlightening description of the issues plaguing American vocational education. In an attempt to learn about the adequacy of vocational education, the image of vocational education, and the meaning of vocational education for special groups, Kaufman and his colleagues employed visiting teams, personal interviews, and mail questionnaires with the graduates of vocational and comprehensive high schools of nine communities (in four neighboring states), their employers, their supervisors, their unions, and their teachers. Succinctly, they found that (a) vocational schools "adequately" prepared their students for the most part with much room for improvement, (b) vocational schools did not possess a favorable image among outsiders, although this was largely due to inattentiveness on the part of employers and others, and (c) non-whites seemed to benefit relatively more from vocational education than from other types of education in terms of how they fared in society.

Unlike previous studies (Eninger, 1965; Kaufman, et al., 1967) of vocational school graduates, our intention is to analyze ongoing vocational high-school experiences. By studying vocational students currently in high school, we can explore the background and decision-making of adolescents actually involved in a part of the operation of the secondary school institution.

---

[1] The Kandel study found that a major portion of the Danish adolescent population was involved in vocational education.

Before describing the specific aims of the study, it is necessary to present a brief overview of vocational education in the United States. From this overview, we shall delimit that part of the full vocational education structure with which this study is concerned.

I. Development of Vocational Education in the United States

During the early American colonial period, the apprenticeship system was the most important means of vocational education. The rapid development of industry changed the occupational needs, reducing the demand for skilled craftsmen, sending the apprenticeship system into a relative decline, and thus making it necessary to organize new types of schools for the education of the nation's workers. Toward the end of the nineteenth century, schools for vocational training were organized on a private basis. Commercial and business schools appeared in large numbers, providing training in penmanship, bookkeeping, business arithmetic, commercial law, and related subjects. The curricula established in these private schools began to be incorporated into commercial courses within the public high schools during the period 1890-1900.

The forerunners of the Trade and Industrial (T and I) programs of the public high schools were the private and proprietary trade schools for employed and prospective workers, organized in the last quarter of the nineteenth century. Such schools provided short courses in the specific skills required by specific occupations, and often were conducted by a corporation which required more skilled workers to increase production.

During this same period, the proposal grew that public funds be used to provide vocational education for those young people who did not expect to go to college. Support began to accumulate for legislation to provide funds for training young people in various occupational skills in the era just before World War I. Organizations as disparate as the National Association of Manufacturers and the American Federation of Labor agreed upon the need for a national system of aid to vocational education. State programs of assistance to vocational education were adopted in Massachusetts (1906), Wisconsin (1907), and in several other rapidly industrializing states. Finally, in 1917, the Smith-Hughes Act established a continuing program for federal assistance to vocational education in agriculture, trades and industry, and homemaking. This initial federal legislation was later supplemented by various other acts, of which the Vocational Education Act of 1963 may prove to be the most important. The general trend followed by the federal legislation has been to increase the amount of financial assistance to the states, provide for greater flexibility in administration, include greater diversity of occupational training areas as suitable for vocational education assistance, and provide funding for training of staff, planning, and research.

II. Present Structure of Vocational Education in the United States

A. Definition of Vocational Education

During the past fifty years, the definition of vocational education has expanded to serve a variety of purposes (Roberts, 1965). The definition used in this study is that used in the Vocational Education Act of 1963 (Public Law 88-210) in identifying the federally aided program of vocational education for less than a baccalaureate degree and states that vocational education is:

> vocational or technical training or retraining which is given in schools or classes (including field or laboratory work incidental thereto) under public supervision and control or under contract with a state board or local educational agency, and is conducted as part of a program designed to fit individuals for gainful employment as semi-skilled or skilled workers or technicians in recognized occupations (including any program designed to fit individuals for gainful employment in business and office occupations, and any program designed to fit individuals for gainful employment which may be assisted by federal funds under the Vocational Education Act of 1946 and supplementary vocational education acts, but excluding any program to fit individuals for employment in occupations which the Commissioner determines, and specified in regulations, to be generally considered professional or as requiring a baccalaureate or higher degree.[2]

B. Types of Vocational Programs

Seven occupational categories have been developed (mostly through federal legislation) to organize vocational education in the United States.

Brief descriptions of the seven categories are outlined below:[3]

---

[2] R.W. Roberts, Vocational and practical arts education, 2nd ed. New York: Harper and Row, 1965, p. 12.

[3] For full and detailed descriptions of the various occupational categories used in vocational education see:

(a) Walsh, J.P. and Selden, W. Vocational education in the secondary school. In M.L. Barlow (Ed.), Vocational education: The sixty-fourth yearbook of the National Society for the Study of Education, Part I. Chicago: The University of Chicago Press.

(b) Kaufman, J.J., et al. The role of the secondary schools in the preparation of youth for employment. University Park, Pa.: Institute on Human Resources, The Pennsylvania State University, 1967. Chapter 5.

1. Agriculture -- farm work; other, often non-farm, agriculturally related occupations.

2. Business -- office-occupation training, communication skills.

3. Distributive - - merchandising, marketing (retail and wholesale).

4. Health Occupations -- practical nursing; medical, dental, and operating technologies.

5. Home Economics -- homemaking, food service, child care, family relationships.

6. Technical -- highly skilled technical training.

7. Trade and Industrial -- skilled and semi-skilled training for industrial design, processing, production, maintenance.

Agricultural, Home Economics, and Trade and Industrial programs have been offered since the Smith-Hughes Act of 1917. The George-Deen Act of 1936 authorized annual appropriations for Distributive Education, although retail selling courses were given to students employed in stores by using industrial education funds as early as 1919. Health Occupations and Technical Education are developing occupational categories in vocational education. Finally, federal funds for Business Education (office-occupation training) were not made available in federal acts prior to 1963, even though several attempts were made to include this area in the federal-aid program. The Vocational Education Act of 1963 provided for the expansion of cooperative office occupations programs.

C, Types of Vocational Schools

Besides specialized vocational schools, the term vocational education can refer to a vocational education program within a comprehensive school, or a program for high school dropouts, or a program for adults, or a program in community or junior colleges. Even when vocational high schools are specified, the type usually is not. For example, there are schools that offer vocational programs only, technical programs only, and a combination of both. While most schools prepare students only for a trade, double-purpose schools also prepare students for continued education, especially at the college level.

A vocational high school may serve students within a school district as well as a wider area encompassing several districts. The latter is called an area school and may draw students from an entire city or county. A modification of the area school is the shared-time school in which students spend half their time at an area vocational school and the other half at their regular district school, obtaining their diploma from their regular high school upon graduation. In large cities, some vocational schools specialize in a single craft or occupation, others are multi-trade schools.

An excerpt from Coe's (1964) article entitled "Vocational Education in the High School" identifies the separate vocational high school. It also clarifies the relatinnship between area and specialized vocational high schools.

> The typical county vocational high school is a fully approved, self-contained high school, giving its graduates a high school diploma. It meets all of the state's general educational requirements, besides providing pre-employment training in some or all of the common areas of specialized vocational education. This is an area vocational school, as defined in the Vocational Education Act of 1963. In fact, it has been, to a large extent, the prototype on which the area-vocational school concept has been developed.
>
> The specialized vocational and technical high school is quite common in large cities. Here enrollments are large enough, and travel distances short enough to achieve the obvious curricular and financial advantages of specialization. Pupils have a wide choice of vocational offerings and usually have all the curricular opportunities of a comprehensive high school, in some cases even college-preparatory electives.

Thus, a specialized vocational high school is a large city's version of an area vocational school. The term specialized vocational high school is preferred in this study and will be used in place of the term area school.

We adopt the first part of the following definition of a vocational school:

> The Vocational Education Act of 1963 defines four types of vocational schools:
>
> 1. A specialized high school used exclusively or almost so to provide full-time vocational education in preparation for full-time work in industry.

2. A department of high school used exclusively or principally to provide training in at least five different occupational fields to those available for full-time study prior to their entering the labor market.

3. A technical or vocational school providing vocational education predominantly to persons who have completed or left school and who are able to study on a full-time basis before going to work.

4. A department or division of a junior college, community college, or university providing vocational education in at least five different occupational fields, under the supervision of the State Board, and leading to immediate employment but not toward a baccalaureate degree.[4]

D. Extent of Secondary Vocational Education in the United States

Despite more than half a billion dollars in federal assistance to vocational education in 1965, state and local contributions were more than three times the federal expenditures. Although the vastness of the vocational education enterprise in the United States is not clearly documented, in 1965 there were more than 5.4 million people enrolled in federally aided vocational education programs of various types. As can be seen in Table 1-1, total secondary school enrollment in these programs constituted more than half the total vocational education effort. Except for growth in some of the newer programs, the picture was much the same in 1967 (see Table 1-1). The rest of the 5.4 million vocational students were enrolled in a variety of programs, including evening classes for employed workers, post-secondary school education for technical occupations, and special programs for disadvantaged youth. More is said about the distribution of vocational schools and secondary vocational students in the methodology chapter.

E. Contemporary Issues in Vocational Education

The basic controversy in vocational education is the extent of public responsibility for training individuals in specific occupational skills which also may be acquired through private arrangements. Critics of present vocational education programs claim:

1. Vocational programs fail to train students adequately to satisfy current manpower needs.

---

[4] M. Russo, Area vocational schools. American Education, U. S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1966, p. 15.

TABLE 1-1

Federally Aided Vocational Programs in the Secondary Schools by Type of Program

	F Y 1965*	F Y 1967**
Agriculture	517,000	506,753
Distribution[1]	76,000	150,118
Health Occupations	9,000	17,919
Home Economics	1,443,000	1,463,314
Office Occupations	498,000	984,387
Technical Education[2]	24,000	27,468
Trade and Industrial	253,000	342,094
Total	2,820,000	3,492,053

*Source: Standard Education Almanac 1968, p. 391.

**Source: U.S. Office of Education, personal communication, September, 1968.

[1] Training in which workers engage in merchandising activities, are in contact with buyers and sellers in distributing goods or services, or are responsible for the management of such business.

[2] Training of highly skilled technicians in recognized occupations requiring scientific knowledge essential in fields relating to national defense.

2. Most industrial establishments prefer to hire students educated in an academic or comprehensive secondary school rather than those trained in a vocational school.

3. Facilities are too costly and become obsolete at too rapid a rate to make training economical.

4. Teachers with the requisite combination of practical trade experience and pedagogical skill can not be located.

5. Practical on-the-job training under actual work conditions quickly removes any observable superiority in performance of those who have received vocational training in a secondary school over those who have not received such training.

6. Vocational schools are really a "dumping ground" for lazy students and slow learners.

7. Vocational education does not provide for the education of the "whole person."

8. Placement in a vocational program tends to lower social expectations for these students, thereby limiting their aspirations unnecessarily.

Another major dispute is whether vocational education should be provided in comprehensive high schools or in specialized vocational high schools. Conant (1959, 1967) has been a strong advocate of the comprehensive high school as the vehicle for secondary education in the United States. Shimberg (1966, p. 1) raises the issue most succinctly:

> Does vocational education belong in the secondary school? Should it be moved into the community college or some other type of post-secondary institution? If it does belong at the secondary level, what arrangement would be most effective? The comprehensive high school? The specialized vocational school? -- or some hybrid institution?

Beyond the basic objections to vocational education enumerated above, critics add these practical disadvantages of the self-contained vocational high school:

1. Transportation is often difficult to obtain and some students are forced to travel long distances;

2. attending these schools often breaks up neighborhood and community ties;

3. the school population is often too homogeneous in terms of experiences, capacities, and interests, as well as in ethnic and socioeconomic background (viz., Negroes and other minority groups); and,

4. such a school provides far fewer opportunities for extracurricular interaction than does a comprehensive high school.

On the other hand, the advocates of specialized vocational high schools have available a certain amount of data to suggest that these criticisms of the specialized vocational schools are not all warranted. For example, data reported by Flanagan, et al. (1962) for Project Talent indicated that vocational high school facilities do not differ in any great respect from those of academic and comprehensive high schools in a national sample and Kaufman, et al. (1967) obtained similar results in their four-state sample.

Despite the information indicating that some common criticisms of specialized vocational schools may be unfounded, such criticisms persist even among groups in the community which are well-acquainted with these schools. Wenrich & Crowley (1964) report that school professionals more familiar with vocational Trade and Industrial education were more critical of it than those not as informed. Employers were shown to be more critical than teachers or administrators of the claim that vocational education is of assistance to high school students seeking a secure future (see Wenrich & Crowley, 1964).

Many of these issues have arisen in the historical debates on publicly supported vocational education throughout the world. Most of these criticisms have been challenged elsewhere (see Barlow, 1965; Hawkins, Prosser, & Wright, 1951; Kaufman, et al.,1967; Roberts, 1965; Shimberg, 1966), and are not the direct subject of investigation in this study. Our concern is primarily with the attitudes, aspirations, experiences, and goals of vocational students in specialized vocational high schools as well as with the relevant observations of their parents and teachers. It is along these lines that many of the prevalent negative stereotypes about vocational students have developed and persisted.

F. Images and Stereotypes of Vocational Students in the United States

The negative image of vocational education in the United States is not difficult to document. One of the nation's weekly news magazines presented vocational schools in the following manner:

> Vocational training: the very phrase calls up the smell of plastic ashtrays, the clink of copper trinkets, the ennui of workshops crowded with delinquents manning lathes and squirting grease into crankcases. Vocational training should be a major source of steady employment for U.S. youths. Instead, it has become an educational junkyard for rejects from a college-geared society. (Time, July 19, 1968)

Even members of the educational community often malign vocational schools. According to Havighurst's (1964) survey of The Public Schools of Chicago, "To many academic teachers and guidance personnel, vocational schools are remedial in nature and exist to clear the way in general high schools for academically talented students." Havighurst here is referring indirectly to the "dumping ground" image of vocational education among American educators and parents. And some vocational students seem to share this image: in her study of the relationship between self-attitudes and attitudes toward vocational high school, Silverman (1963) found vocational high school students to have strong positive feelings for students in regular or academic high schools, while they had a strong inclination to feel that vocational education was relegated to second place by the public. However, both the Havighurst (1964) and Silverman (1963) findings are based on studies of vocational schools located in very large metropolitan areas (Chicago and New York). Street (1966) reports that vocational education has not been able to fulfill its purpose as well in the city as it has elsewhere.

One portrayal of non-urban vocational-school students does not directly apply "dumping ground" or second-rate images to these schools. Still, it does imply the presence of a negative selection process. Coe (1964) collected the following impressions in attempting to portray "typical" students in a non-urban vocational school program.

1. In terms of I.Q., vocational students form a relatively homogeneous group of low ability students from the high school population.

2. The ethnic groups in the community are not proportionally represented in the vocational school population.

3. Vocational school students have strong drives for early economic independence and tend to marry young. Many hold part-time jobs while in school.

4. The parents of these students are working-class people from the skilled and semi-skilled occupations. Few have parents who are college graduates.

5. Geographic mobility is not great; graduates seek to obtain jobs in the local area and stay there.

6. Vocational school students participate in extra-curricular activities less frequently, use the library less; they show less interest in the academic areas of study than do other students. They have less drive to complete high school and earn a diploma, especially the girls.

Contrary to the above observations, Eninger (1965), in his study of graduates from vocational Trade and Industrial programs, found that vocational and non-college-going academic graduates had similar conversational interests, leisure time activities, and organizational affiliations. They were also similar in attitudes toward school and job satisfaction. On the other hand, Kaufman, _et al_. (1967) found evidence in support of Coe's (1964) first impression.

III. Aims of the Study

Many of these observations of vocational education are impressions of adults and vocational school graduates. We sought how the vocational education students themselves describe their experiences and impressions. The overall aim of this study was to extend a line of research on comprehensive high school students (Coleman, 1961; Kandel, _et al_., 1968) to adolescents enrolled in specialized vocational high schools, dealing with the student social system of the high school, the relative importance of various high school activities and behaviors, and the relative influences of peers and parents on the lives of adolescents. By applying this line of research to vocational students, it is possible to test the accuracy and appropriateness of some of the stereotypes and images that have been cultivated about them.

The third chapter of this report contains simple descriptions of the responses of vocational education students in America. These descriptions speak, for example, to the stigma of "dumping ground" attached to vocational education. We asked students to tell why they went to vocational schools, who influenced their decisions to go, and their evaluations of their high school experiences. As another simple description, we inquired about the extent to which vocational education was perceived as terminal education. This information was obtained by asking students to report their plans and aspirations after high school.

The fourth chapter examines the relative influence of parents, teachers, and peers on aspects of vocational students' scholastic achievement, adolescent personality, and attitudes toward parents and peers. In this section, we investigate the appropriateness for vocational students of the peer-orientation stereotype widely ascribed to American adolescents. We also report the parents' attitudes toward vocational education and their plans and aspirations for the students after high school.

The fifth chapter somewhat repeats the themes of the third chapter by using these and other descriptions of vocational students to compare them with students in comprehensive high schools: here specialized vocational high school students are compared with three major types of comprehensive high school students, academic, general, and commercial.

Not only are vocational-comprehensive school comparisons made, but comparisons among the comprehensive school programs also were made, providing a more differentiated and realistic analysis of comprehensive high school students. Until now, these high school students have been studied as one group instead of being partitioned according to their tracks or programs which may have far-reaching personality and status implications for their lives. Thus, at least in the areas of attitudes and high school experiences, we examine the aecusation that the presumed integrative function of comprehensive high schools (see Conant, 1959, 1967) has been vitiated (see Street, 1966) by the separation within the high school of these students according to their different programs of study.

Chapter Six presents data on Danish vocational students similar to those reported in Chapter Three on American vocational students. Through this cross-cultural comparison of the experiences and conditions of vocational students we take yet another look at the stereotypes about American vocational students.

Chapter 2

Methodology

This investigation concentrates on the high school and related experiences of specialized vocational students, defined as adolescents who attended specialized vocational high schools on a full-time basis during the last period of their compulsory education. The term, "specialized vocational high school," is used to describe a fully approved, self-contained high school that provides a wide choice of vocational offerings and gives its graduates a high school diploma (see Coe, 1964). Although such schools may also offer post-secondary and adult vocational programs, data were collected only from the secondary vocational student.

Before presenting a contextual sketch of the specialized vocational school in America, it is necessary to stipulate one further delimitation in the focus of this study. Only five of the seven occupational categories typically used to organize vocational education in the United States were included in the present study. Specialized vocational schools offering Trade and Industrial Education, Business Education, and Distributive Education programs were actively sought for the sample. Schools with Agricultural Education and Home Economics programs were not included.[1] In all schools, Technical Education students were sampled. This was because they were part of a selected school and the methodology required sampling entire school populations.[2] Two Health Services programs were included for similar reasons.

I. Specialized Vocational Schools

Specialized vocational high school programs contain the same basic components as the vocational programs offered in regular or comprehensive high schools. For our purposes, the major difference between these two types of vocational programs is that one is given in a school along with several other educational tracks, while the other is devoted exclusively to a vocational education track.

---

[1] The American sample was defined to contain occupational categories similar to those available in the Danish vocational schools.

[2] The use of questionnaire data in sociometric analyses was the main methodological reason for sampling whole schools for the study.

Detailed information about the distribution of American specialized vocational high school students is not available. However, it is possible to present an overview of the presence of vocational students in American education: the Standard Educational Almanac (1968) reports that 2,820,000 of the nation's 11,746,000 public secondary school students were enrolled in federally aided vocational programs (based on 1965 data); thus, about twenty-four percent of the nation's public high school students were involved in the several forms of vocational education.

More recent information (Office of Education[3]) reveals that, during the fiscal years 1966 and 1967, respectively, 3,048,248 and 3,492,053 secondary students were enrolled in American vocational education. For each year, secondary students represented roughly one-half the vocational students. The other half were post-secondary and adult vocational students. For the entire American secondary public school population (11,898,000) in fiscal year 1967, all secondary vocational students again comprised about one-quarter of the students. Unfortunately, figures describing the vocational student population by type of school are not available. The year-to-year increase in vocational students probably reflects the normal population increase.

The Office of Education figures showed the number of specialized vocational schools decreased from fiscal year 1966 (431) to fiscal year 1967 (325). Thus, in 1966, only 2.66% of the public secondary schools[4] offering vocational programs were specialized vocational high schools. This figure dropped to 1.93% in 1967. Conversely, for the same period, there was an increase in the number of vocational programs being offered in regular or comprehensive high schools (from 15,592 to 16,361). This means that, although 25% of the nation's secondary students are in vocational programs, only about 2% of the secondary schools offering vocational programs are specialized vocational high schools. And the number of specialized vocational schools seems to be in decline.

---

[3] Personal communication from the Office of Education, 1968.

[4] These include specialized vocational, regular or comprehensive, and secondary and post-secondary combined schools.

II. Subjects

A. Respondents Sampled

In addition to collecting data from specialized vocational students (N=3060), the parents (N=1795) and teachers (N=173) of these students were asked to fill out self-administered questionnaires. (Tables 2-1, 2-2, 2-3 show the breakdowns for these three groups by schools and for total sample.) The parent and teacher data were collected to supplement the student data. These data were also used to compare parents and students on certain items, (a) to estimate the accuracy of student answers and (b) to infer parental influence.

A fourth group of respondents was the principals of the six schools included in the study. The principals were interviewed and asked to fill out questionnaires seeking demographic, fiscal, and policy information about their respective schools. These data were employed primarily to describe the characteristics of the schools and students sampled.

Finally, students from three comprehensive schools[5] provided data used in this study. These data were part of a study of adolescent societies which used questionnaires sharing many of the items in the present study. This earlier study of comprehensive high school students (Kandel, et al., 1968) may be referred to for details about the characteristics of those students.

B. Factors Affecting the Sample Selected

At the outset, it was decided that six specialized vocational schools[6] would comprise the sample. The actual selection of these six schools was affected mainly by three considerations: (1) the type of community that the school served (rural, small city, large city); (2) a knowledge of the distribution of specialized vocational high schools throughout the United States; (3) the inclusion of Negro students in the sample. The application of these factors to the school selection process is not to be construed as a systematic attempt to achieve truly representative sampling. On the other hand, our efforts to control for

---

[5] Data collected in 1965.

[6] The number of comprehensive schools available for comparisons from previous studies and the fact that Danish vocational schools had to be sampled, too, contributed to the decision to keep the number of American vocational schools reasonably low.

TABLE 2-1

U.S. Vocational Student Questionnaire Returns
For Each School and For Total Sample

School Identification Number	Number of Students Enrolled*			Number of Students Responding to Questionnaire			Percent[2] of Students Not Responding to Questionnaire
	Boys	Girls	Total	Boys	Girls	Total	
School 71	291	26	317	266	25	291	8%
School 72	240	104	344	220	102	322	6
School 73[1]	350	-	350	322	-	322	8
School 74	194	223	417	187	214	401	4
School 75	504	402	906	482	381	863	5
School 76	554	394	948	504	357	861	9
Total Sample	2133	1149	3282	1981	1079	3060	7%

*As reported by principals on their questionnaires.

[1] This was an all-boys school.

[2] These students were absent when the questionnaires were administered in their schools.

TABLE 2-2

U.S. Parent Questionnaire Returns For Each School and For Total Sample

School Identification Number	Number of Student Respondents (a)	Students Whose Parents Could Not Respond* (b)	Students Whose Parents Could Respond (c)	Number of Parent Responses (d)	Percent Parent Responses[1] (e)
School 71	291	35	256	187	73%
School 72	322	10	312	270	87
School 73	322	23	299	217	73
School 74	401	51	350	218	62
School 75	863	109	754	547	73
School 76	861	154	707	356	50
Total	3060	382	2678	1795	67%

*Since only one parent questionnaire was desired per family, these numbers include parents having more than one child in the school; in such cases, the mother was asked to complete her questionnaire for her oldest child in school, ignoring her younger children. Students whose parents' addresses were incorrectly listed or not available to the investigators are also included in these figures.

[1] Parent response rate column (e) was arrived at by dividing figures in column (d) by those in column (c).

TABLE 2-3

U.S. Teacher Questionnaire Returns For Each School and For Total Sample

School Identification Number	*Number of Teachers in School	Number of Teacher Respondents	Percentage of Teacher Respondents
School 71	36	30	83%
School 72	16	14	88
School 73	22	17	77
School 74	31	27	87
School 75	69	55	80
School 76	48	30	63
Total Sample	222	173	78%

*As listed on teacher rosters provided by schools.

these variables probably increased the sample's representativeness. The influences of these three factors on the sample are now discussed in turn.

(1) Type of community.

Schools serving three types of communities (rural=under 25,000, small city=25,000 to 100,000, and large city=100,000 to 1,000,000) were sought; two schools for each community type made up the sample. In part, this sampling decision was made to render the data comparable to earlier comprehensive or regular high school studies (Kandel, et al., 1968; McDill, et al., 1966) that employed schools from these types of communities. A second reason for sampling community types in this way was to allow for comparisons with schools and community types sampled in Denmark. This plan prevented the inclusion of large metropolitan or urban area schools in the sample, but the special problems and characteristics of schools in huge urban areas warranted their exclusion. For example, although interesting, the large number of Puerto Ricans and Negroes in New York City schools is not representative of vocational schools throughout the nation.

No noteworthy problems were encountered in obtaining schools to represent the types of communities sought. Table 2-4 contains the pseudonyms assigned to the six communities of the sampled schools and provides other pertinent information about them. The following brief accounts[7] of the specialized vocational high schools' communities are meant to produce a backdrop against which to present the schools and subjects of the study. These sketches also yield information for judging the types of American communities represented in the study.

School 71 (Rural). Cornertown is located in hilly, scenic countryside near the common border of several Northeastern states. Within the county of which Cornertown is a part, approximately 75% of the population live in urban settlements. About a third of the population is of foreign stock. About 45% of the adult population has completed high school; the median number of school years completed is 11.1 years. Major industries in the area are electronics, chemicals, and metal working. The median annual income per family is $6,120; a little less than 15% of the families in the county earn less than $3,000 annually, while over 15% earn more than $10,000. About 15% of the land in the county is used for agriculture. About 1% of the population is Negro. Ninety percent of the total county employment is divided equally between manufacturing and white-collar occupations.

---

[7] The various population, income, and educational data presented in these descriptions were obtained from 1960 census reports. All presently available information seems to indicate that, for the purposes of comparison within and among the six locations, these figures provide fairly accurate relative indices.

TABLE 2-4

Pseudonyms Assigned to Communities from which Six U.S. Schools Were Selected, Their Geographic Regions, Type of Community, and Population

School Identification Number	Geographic Region of Community	Pseudonym	Type of Community	Population of Community (in thousands)
School 71	New England	Cornertown	Rural	20
School 72	Mideastern	Hilltown	Rural	5
School 73	New England	Winsburg	Small City	45
School 74	Southeastern	Dixport	Small City	61
School 75	Great Lakes	Great City	Large City	465
School 76	Southeastern	South City	Large City	128

School 72 (Rural). Hilltown is a small rural community located within an essentially agricultural county. The population of Hilltown has remained fairly stable, with the number of people who leave being about the same as the rate of natural increase. The median number of school years completed by adults within the county is 8.9 years, with 5% having less than five years of education. About 15% of the population in the county is of "foreign stock." (Both the foreign-born population and the native population of foreign or mixed parentage were included in the term "foreign stock.") About 1% of the population is Negro. Despite the fact that over 40% of the land is given over to agriculture, 40% of employment in the county is in manufacturing. The median income for the county is $5,000, with about 25% of the population living in families with an annual income of less than $3,000. About 7% of the population lives in families with an annual income above $10,000. Stone, clay, and glass products rank among the important industries in this region.

School 73 (Small city). Winsburg is located in a heavily populated county not very far from one of the largest cities in the United States. The median family income in this county is $7,370; nearly 30% of the population lives in families with an annual income of more than $10,000. Less than 10% of the population lives in families with an annual income of less than $3,000; about 5% of the population is Negro. From 1950 to 1960 the county's population increased by 30%. Almost half the adults in the county graduated from high school; about 40% come from foreign stock. Almost half of those employed are engaged in white-collar occupations; almost 40% are employed in manufacturing. Electronics, metals, and textiles are among the chief industries.

School 74 (Small city). Dixport is a small port city in the vicinity of a naval base. Approximately a third of the population is Negro. The median annual income per family is $5,200. More than 25% of the population earns less than $3,000 a year. A little more than a third of the adult population has at least a high school education; median school years completed is 10.3 years. There is greater employment in retailing than in manufacturing, but manufacturing does constitute more than 20% of aggregate employment. Industrial employment has tended to decline within the past decade. Over one-third of the population is under 18 years of age. Less than 2% of the population is foreign-born.

School 75 (Large city). Great City is located in the Great Lakes region. It offers a variety of employment opportunities; about 50% of those employed do white-collar work, 25% are employed in various manufacturing industries, and 25% in retail and wholesale jobs. Median annual income per family is $6,400 with 14% earning less than $3,000. Over 7% of the population is foreign-born; less than 4% are Negro. A little less than half the adults in Great City have completed high school; median school years completed is 11.7 years. Slightly more than 25% of the population is under 18 years of age.

School 76 (Large city). A fairly large river runs through South City, which is located in a mountainous region. The median annual income per family is $4,450, with a large proportion of the population engaged in working in manufacturing establishments. Almost a third of the population lives in family units which earn less than $3,000 per year; a third of the population is Negro. Less than 1% of the population is foreign-born; median school years completed per adult is 9.2 years. Over a third of the population is under 18 years of age. Less than 10% of the families have an annual income of $10,000 or more.

2. Distribution of vocational high schools in America.

Reasonably accurate information about the distribution of specialized vocational high schools in America is difficult to obtain. The major difficulty was that no current (in 1966) comprehensive directory or listing of the various vocational educational programs[8] in American secondary schools was available. The task of surveying each state for detailed information about its specialized vocational high schools was considered too costly and time-consuming. An alternative plan for assessing the distribution of schools that was less involved and reasonably veridical was employed.

First, letters were sent to the directors of vocational education of the forty-eight continental states, requesting listings of the specialized vocational high schools in their states. They were further asked to note vocational schools they felt were representative of such schools in their states. Finally, permission to visit some of these schools in order to consider them for inclusion in our sample was requested.

Almost all the state directors (92%) answered the letters and the remaining four were contacted by phone. Their responses indicated whether their states operated specialized vocational high schools and, if so, selected those they considered representative and typical of others in their states. In following up these letters, directors were contacted by phone to ascertain that other criteria were met by the schools they judged to be representative, e.g., that a school was not being offered merely because it was the best or newest in the state. In this last regard, it should be noted that directors very helpfully complied with the criterion of selecting representative schools, also assisting greatly by extending invitations and providing authorizations for visitations.

---

[8] The one directory available at the time was of limited value, being obsolete and not distinguishing specialized from comprehensive school programs. This was the U.S. Office of Education Directory: 1961-62, Preparatory Trade and Industrial Training in Public Schools. Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, 1962 (OE-84028-62 Bulletin, 1963, No. 4).

The second source of information on the pool and distribution of specialized vocational high schools was derived from Eninger's (1965) study of graduates ("products") of vocational programs in the United States. This information was necessary because the listings and other communications from the states were not always complete, accurate, or current. Thus, the state information alone could not be used to construct an adequate overview of specialized vocational high schools but was supplemented by information from the Eninger study.

Table 2-5 shows the population and sample distributions of schools by geographic region (Eninger, 1965). Also shown in Table 2-5 is the distribution of specialized vocational high schools[9] selected in the Eninger study of high school graduates. First, Eninger identified the population of comprehensive and vocational[10] schools offering three or more T and I courses from the 1961-62 U.S. Office of Education Directory. He then surveyed the state directors to update the directory information and found that there were 667 schools meeting his criteria. Finally, Eninger drew a sample of 50 comprehensive schools and 50 vocational schools, in proportion to their frequency in the geographic regions. These proportions were used to determine the regional emphases that were used in the present study. The six schools sampled here consist of two from the Southeast, two from New England, and one school each from the Mideast and the Great Lakes area. At the time, this distribution information was the best available[11] and was largely corroborated by the listings received from the state directors' offices.

---

[9] Except for this column, which came in a personal communication from Eninger, Table 2 is taken from Eninger's (1965) report.

[10] Eninger distinguished among vocational, vocational-technical, and technical high schools. This study does not.

[11] In 1968, an excellent directory of the 1966 programs in vocational education in the United States was published by the Center for Studies in Vocational and Technical Education at the University of Wisconsin. (Directory Vocational Education Programs 1966).

TABLE 2-5

Distribution of the Eninger Study's Population and Sample of Schools by Geographic Region

Geographic Regions	Population of Schools with T&I Programs		Sample of Schools with T&I Programs		*Number of Specialized Vocational High Schools in Sample
	N	%			
1. New England	72	10.8	11	11	10
2. Mideast	162	24.3	24	24	10
3. Great Lakes	100	15.0	15	15	7
4. Plains	48	7.2	7	7	5
5. Southeast	196	29.4	29	29	15
6. Southwest	54	8.1	8	8	1
7. Rocky Mountains	8	0.2	1	1	0
8. Far West & Pacific	27	4.5	5	5	2
United States	667	99.5	100	100	50

*Personal communication, 1966. The rest of this table is from Eninger's report (1965, pp. 1-7).

3. Negro students.

In selecting schools, an attempt was made to include at least one vocational school wtih a representative enrollment of Negro students. It was not possible to accomplish this goal. In communities with schools that had Negro students, conditions thwarted attempts to include their schools. On two separate and consecutive occasions, large-city schools with 20% or more Negro students withdrew their agreements to participate in the study. Similar administrative reasons for withdrawal were proffered by each school: there was considerable unrest among the parents and/or teachers of these schools and the administrators felt it was in the best interest of the schools for them to withdraw from the study. Although forced to accept these decisions, the investigators also concurred for methodological reasons; unrest among the respondents would likely distort their responses to the items of the questionnaire. The purpose of this study, to learn about the characteristics, aspirations, and experiences of specialized vocational high school students, would not have been served.

The large-city school that was finally selected for the sample turned out to have a lower proportion of Negroes enrolled than was anticipated. Thus, the sample of vocational students in this study consists mainly of white American adolescents.[12]

C. Preselection Visitations to Schools

Questionnaires were administered in March, 1967. Approximately five months before this time, schools tentatively selected for the study were visited by project personnel. Of the six schools in the study, five had been visited during this earlier period. The principal of the sixth school was interviewed by phone in order to determine the extent to which his school and students were the type being studied. His school was selected after two other large-city schools had withdrawn their offers to participate in the study.

Multiple functions were served through the school visitations: (1) establishing rapport with its personnel and securing its commitment to participate in the study, (2) ascertaining that numerous vocational education and other classifications shared equivalent meanings for the schools and the investigators,[13] (3) enabling the investigators to learn about school conditions so that details for administering the student questionnaires could be arranged; examples of these details were class schedule, number of rooms available for test administration, and room capacity, (4) providing an opportunity to determine the types of communities served by the schools. Finally, preliminary visits allowed interviews to be conducted with small groups of students to gather ideas for new and proposed questionnaire items. These informal exchanges with students were considered a normal part of the visitation. It is very doubtful that these interviews had any bearing on later questionnaire administrations, since specific items were not discussed. Rather, topical areas for the questionnaire were explored.

---

[12] A large, inner-city vocational high school with 85% Negroes was used to pretest the questionnaires of this study. Ninety percent of these test items were retained. Funds have been requested to provide for the analysis of these data.

D. Vocational Programs of the High Schools Sampled[14]

Tables 2-6 and 2-7 describe the major programs of the six schools sampled and their relative enrollments. The bulk of the students in these schools were enrolled in Trade and Industrial programs. In Table 2-7, the T and I figure for the entire sample is about 67%. Business Education (19%) and Technical Education (10%) were the second and third most represented programs, respectively, while Distributive Education (3%) and Health Occupation (1%) programs contributed the least number of students to the sample. The program profiles of the sampled schools (see Table 2-7) closely matched the intention of the study to concentrate on T and I programs.

E. Students

The total student sample of the six specialized vocational high schools was 3,060: 1,981 boys and 1,079 girls. Of these students, 58 were Negroes (31 boys and 27 girls). Only School 73 was an all boys school; the other five were coeducational. (A detailed numerical breakdown of the student sample is presented in Table 2-1.) Tables 2-8 to 2-12 contain other pertinent data on the students by school

---

[13] For example, one visit revealed that students being bussed from their regular high schools to an adult vocational school's annex shops for one-half day were designated as "specialized vocational high school students."

[14] The six vocational schools in this study are in the list of area vocational education schools reported in projected program activities for fiscal year 1968 (U.S. Office of Education, personal communication, September, 1968).

Table 2-6

Distribution of U.S. Students in Trade Programs for Each School and for Total Sample

Trade[1] Program		SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Percent In:								
1. Air Conditioning	TI	-	-	-	-	-	4	1
2. Auto Mechanics	TI	12	13	21	18	8	10	12
3. Business	B	-	1	-	29	19	35	19
4. Carpentry	TI	2	-	16	1	3	5	4
5. Chemical Technology	T	-	9	-	-	-	-	1
6. Commercial Art	TI	-	-	-	-	6	3	3
7. Cosmetology	TI	2	16	-	18	5	5	7
8. Data Processing	T	-	14	-	-	-	-	2
9. Distributive Educ.	D	-	8	-	8	4	2	3
10. Drafting	TI	3	12	14	1	-	5	5
11. Electrical Trade	TI	13	-	17	2	5	4	6
12. Electronics	T	13	11	15	6	6	3	8
13. Hotel & Restaurant Cooking	TI	12	-	-	-	9	-	4
14. Machine Shop	TI	16	14	17	4	5	9	10

(Table Continued)

Table 2-6 (Cont.)

Trade[1] Program		SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER						
		71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Percent In:								
15. Needle Arts-Tailoring	TI	-	-	-	-	12	-	4
16. Plant Maintenance	TI	15	-	-	-	-	-	1
17. Pre Nursing	H	-	-	-	5	1	-	1
18. Printing	TI	-	-	-	-	7	4	3
19. Sheet Metal	TI	10	-	-	3	3	4	4
20. Welding	TI	-	-	1	-	-	5	2
*OTHER	TI	1	1	-	5	6	2	3

---

[1] Occupational Categories of the programs

B = Business
D = Distributive
H = Health Occupations
T = Technical
TI= Trade & Industrial

*Besides the "OTHER" category on questionnaire, this includes three trades with less than 1% responses, i.e., painting, shoe repairs, and upholstering.

TABLE 2-7

Percentage of U.S. Students in the Various Occupational Categories Offered in Their Schools

School Identification Number	Percent in Occupational Category				
	Business Education	Distributive Education	Health Occupations	Technical Education	Trade & Industrial
School 71	-	-	-	13%	87%
School 72	1%	8%	-	35	57
School 73	-	-	-	15	85
School 74	29	8	5%	6	53
School 75	19	4	1	6	70
School 76	35	2	-	3	60
ALL SCHOOLS	19%	3%	1%	10%	67%

Table 2-8

Distributions of U.S. Students in Grades at each School by Sex and for Total Sample

School Identification Number	Percent Boys (N=1981)				Percent Girls (N=1079)				Percent All Students (N=3060)			
	Grades				Grades				Grades			
	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12
School 71 (N=291)	31	24	23	23	4	44	36	16	29	25	24	22
School 72 (N=322)	-	-	42	58	-	-	51	49	-	-	48	52
School 73 (N=322)	28	32	22	18	ALL BOYS SCHOOL				28	32	22	18
School 74 (N=401)	-	34	33	33	1	35	33	30	1	35	33	32
School 75 (N=863)	-	37	30	33	-	31	33	36	-	34	31	34
School 76 (N=861)	-	38	35	28	-	43	36	20	-	40	35	25
Total	9	30	32	30	1	33	35	31	6	31	33	30

Table 2-9

Distribution of U.S. Students' Ages for each School by Sex and for Total Sample

School Identification Number	Percent Boys (N=1981) Ages					Percent Girls (N=1079) Ages					Percent All Students (N=3060) Ages				
	14-15	16	17	18	19+	14-15	16	17	18	19+	14-15	16	17	18	19+
School 71 (N = 291)	26	21	23	18	12	16	16	52	16	-	25	21	26	18	11
School 72 (N = 322)	-	41	44	14	3	-	30	58	12	-	-	37	48	13	2
School 73 (N = 322)	36	25	24	11	4	ALL BOYS SCHOOL					36	25	24	11	4
School 74 (N = 401)	9	24	31	25	11	14	31	38	13	4	12	27	35	19	7
School 75 (N = 863)	21	33	32	12	2	22	30	38	9	1	22	32	35	11	1
School 76 (N = 861)	10	27	32	23	8	19	38	26	15	3	14	31	29	20	6
Total (N = 3060)	18	28	31	17	6	17	33	36	12	2	18	30	33	15	5

Table 2-10

Distribution of U.S. Fathers' Occupations[1] by School and for Total Sample

Fathers' Occupation	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Percent In:							
Professional, semi-professional, technical	7	6	6	5	6	5	5
Managers, executives, officials, owners	8	13	17	18	13	10	13
Clerical, sales	7	3	2	7	9	5	6
Foreman, skilled workers	34	29	41	43	33	37	36
Unskilled, semi-skilled, laborer	42	46	32	23	37	36	36
Farming	-	1	1	-	-	1	1
Unemployed, disabled	1	1	-	2	2	3	2
"Don't know"	1	1	1	2	2	4	2
Total N	248	295	322	317	749	668	2571

[1] From student's item 363-64.

Table 2-11

Distribution of U.S. Fathers' Education[1] by School and for Total Sample

Fathers' Education	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Percent With:							
Some grade school	19	6	13	22	11	29	17
Finished grade school	12	15	13	12	14	15	14
Some high school	33	42	33	38	32	31	34
Finished high school	26	29	36	20	32	18	27
Some college	6	3	3	5	5	5	5
Finished college	3	2	1	3	2	3	2
Attended graduate or professional school	2	3	1	1	3	1	2
Total N	267	309	305	358	789	710	2748

[1] From student's item 369.

Table 2-12

Distributions of U.S. Students' Responses on Selected

Variables by School and for Total Sample

Variable	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
(a) (Item: S360) Student's birthplace: Percent born in state	88 (287)	97 (314)	80 (316)	65 (388)	88 (844)	80 (804)	83 (2953)
(b) (Item: S361) Father's birthplace: Percent born in state	75 (280)	93 (313)	57 (314)	39 (368)	67 (817)	64 (756)	65 (2848)
(c) (Item: S362) Mother's birthplace Percent born in state	77 (282)	92 (311)	52 (313)	39 (382)	68 (836)	63 (792)	65 (2916)
(d) (Item: S357) Percent who lived in town more than 10 years	77 (284)	82 (313)	72 (315)	54 (384)	61 (833)	48 (793)	62 (2922)
(e) (Item: S353) Percent from intact homes	78 (283)	90 (307)	79 (309)	64 (378)	68 (817)	63 (801)	71 (2895)
(f) (Item: S365) Percent with working mothers	66 (281)	31 (314)	58 (311)	42 (384)	51 (834)	50 (791)	50 (2917)

(Table Continued)

Table 2-12 (Cont.)

Variable	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
(g)(Item: S370) Percent mothers with less than high school education	52	46	39	66	47	76	57
	(271)	(311)	(308)	(370)	(817)	(760)	(2837)
(h)(Item: S356) Student's ordinal position in family:							
oldest	29	27	29	24	21	25	25
youngest	25	26	20	25	22	29	25
between	40	42	44	44	52	39	44
twin or only child	6	6	6	7	6	6	6
	(282)	(312)	(316)	(382)	(845)	(798)	(2936)
(i)(Item: S358) Student's religious preference							
Protestant	29	65	41	81	51	90	63
Catholic	69	32	57	12	46	4	32
Jewish	-	1	1	1	1	2	1
other	-	3	1	3	2	4	2
none	1	-	-	4	1	2	2
	(278)	(302)	(304)	(358)	(793)	(705)	(2740)

and for the total sample. Students were in Grades 9-12, although not all schools had all four grades (see Table 2-8). Most of the students were between the ages of 15 and 18, while a small percentage were 14 and 19 or older (see Table 2-9). Table 2-10 shows that more than two-thirds of the students' fathers were skilled and unskilled workers. Moreover, a little more than one-quarter of the students' fathers finished high school, and another 9% went beyond high school to advanced education.

F. Parents

Two-thirds (1,795) of the parents (Table 2-2) of the vocational students sampled responded to the questionnaires they received in the mail. A little more than 95% of these returned parents' questionnaires (see Table 2-17a) were filled out by the students' mothers. Tables 2-13 to 2-17 present basic demographic and other breakdowns on the parents who participated in the study. The distributions of fathers' occupations reported by the parents (Table 2-14) correspond closely to the ones given by the students (Table 2-10). Similar corroboration is found between the students' and parents' (Table 2-15) reports of father's education. For the entire parent sample, 73% (Table 2-17) lived in their town for more than 10 years and 85% of the parents (Table 2-17) felt that they belonged in their community. About one-half the mothers were working mothers (Table 2-17). A third of the mothers reported being Roman Catholic, while two-thirds said they were Protestants (Table 2-17).

G. Respondent vs. Non-respondent Mothers

Since one-third of the parents' questionnaires were not returned, it was necessary to learn whether responding mothers were appreciably different from non-responding mothers. If it were found that responding mothers' replies were different from those of non-responding mothers, perhaps the areas of difference could be stipulated by reference to the students' responses to relevant items. To simplify discussing comparisons between the two groups of students, the groups are referred to as responding and non-responding mothers, bearing in mind that the information about mothers came from their children.

Table 2-18 presents the results of five demographic variables with which responding and nonresponding mothers were compared. On four out of these five basic, and most likely interrelated, variables, non-responding mothers were found to differ quite significantly ($p \leq .0001$) from responding mothers. Non-responding mothers (a) had less education, (b) had non-intact families, (c) lived in their towns for a shorter time, and (d) were employed. The distribution of husband's occupation did not differ markedly for the two types of mothers.

Table 2-13

Distribution of Students[1] (by Sex and Grade)
Whose Parents Answered Questionnaire

School Identification Number	Percent Boys Grade				Percent Girls Grade				Percent All Students Grade				N Parent Responses
	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	9	10	11	12	
School 71 (N = 187)	27	29	21	27	-	62	31	8	25	27	22	26	(186)
School 72 (N = 270)	-	-	52	48	-	-	46	54	-	-	50	50	(268)
School 73 (N = 217)	24	35	21	20	ALL BOYS SCHOOL				24	35	21	20	(216)
School 74 (N = 218)	-	25	39	36	-	27	40	34	-	26	39	35	(216)
School 75 (N = 547)	-	35	31	34	-	30	31	39	-	33	31	36	(547)
School 76 (N = 356)	-	33	38	29	1	36	41	23	1	34	39	26	(355)
Total (N = 1795)	8	27	33	32	-	28	37	35	6	27	34	33	(1788)

---

[1] From parent's item 112.

TABLE 2-14

Distribution of U. S. Father's Occupations[1] by School and for Total Sample

Father's Occupation	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER 71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Professional, semi-professional, technical	5	6	3	6	5	4	5
Manager, executives, officials, owners	8	11	16	17	9	9	11
Clerical, sales	8	5	4	10	8	6	7
Foreman, skilled workers	37	37	36	41	38	35	37
Unskilled, semi-skilled, laborer	38	37	37	26	37	40	36
Farming	2	2	2	1	-	-	1
Unemployed, disabled	-	2	1	1	2	4	2
"Don't know"	1	-	-	1	1	1	1
Total N	(179)	(258)	(214)	(200)	(512)	(309)	(1672)

---

[1] From parent's item 132-33.

TABLE 2-15

Distribution of U. S. Father's Education[1] by School and for Total Sample

Father's Education	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER						
	71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Percent with:							
Some grade school	14	11	8	21	11	31	16
Finished grade school	20	24	17	15	23	21	21
Some high school	32	25	39	32	31	30	31
Finished high school	26	32	26	24	23	12	23
Some college	5	5	8	7	9	5	7
Finished college	1	1	1	1	2	-	1
Attended graduate or professional school	1	3	1	1	1	1	1
Total N	(182)	(259)	(212)	(200)	(519)	(325)	(1699)

---

[1] From parent's item 148.

TABLE 2-16

Distribution of U. S. Mother's Education[1] by School and for Total Sample

Mother's Education	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER						
	71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools
Percent with:							
Some grade school	7	6	6	15	5	22	10
Finished grade school	16	17	14	9	14	22	16
Some high school	30	26	28	43	36	34	33
Finished high school	37	42	44	27	37	18	34
Some college	8	6	6	5	8	3	6
Finished college	2	2	2	1	1	1	1
Attended graduate or professional school	-	2	1	1	-	1	1
Total N	(183)	(266)	(216)	(214)	(533)	(344)	(1756)

---

[1] From parent's item 149.

TABLE 2-17

Distribution of U.S. Parents' Responses on Selected Variables by School and for Total Sample

Variable	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER						
	71	72	73	74	75	76	All Schools (N=1795)
(a)(Item: P110) Percent questionnaires filled out by mother	95 (186)	98 (270)	96 (216)	93 (218)	96 (547)	93 (356)	95 (1793)
(b)(Item: P121) Father's birthplace: Percent born in state	77 (183)	94 (263)	57 (213)	38 (203)	70 (518)	67 (319)	68 (1698)
(c)(Item: P122) Mother's birthplace: Percent born in state	79 (185)	93 (265)	54 (215)	38 (217)	74 (541)	64 (346)	69 (1759)
(d)(Item: P123) Percent who lived in town more than 10 years	89 (186)	90 (267)	73 (217)	61 (216)	74 (544)	58 (347)	73 (1777)
(e)(Item: P124) Percent who feel they belong in community	89 (186)	93 (267)	85 (215)	77 (214)	83 (539)	83 (346)	85 (1766)
(f)(Item: P128) Percent working mothers	64 (184)	30 (267)	57 (216)	41 (213)	53 (538)	52 (346)	49 (1764)
(g)(Item: P332) Political affiliation:							
Percent: Democrat	68	54	59	76	82	68	70
Republican	30	46	40	20	17	31	29
Third Party	1	1	1	4	1	2	1
	(89)	(165)	(98)	(71)	(306)	(131)	(851)

(Table Continued)

TABLE 2-17 (Cont.)

Variable	SCHOOL IDENTIFICATION NUMBER						All
	71	72	73	74	75	76	Schools (N=1795)
(h)(Item: P333)							
Family Income:							
Percent under $2,000	4	4	1	11	6	16	7
$2,500-$4,999	21	14	6	24	21	24	19
$5,000-$7,499	36	41	25	35	30	30	32
$7,500-$9,999	20	29	38	20	29	22	27
$10,000-$14,999	16	11	27	9	13	7	13
$15,000 or more	1	2	4	2	1	2	2
	(139)	(219)	(159)	(156)	(419)	(265)	(1359)
(i)(Item: P334)							
Religious Preference:							
Percent: Protestant	32	68	44	88	55	96	66
Roman Catholic	66	31	55	11	43	2	33
Jewish	1	-	1	1	-	-	-
Other	-	1	1	-	1	1	1
None	-	-	-	-	-	-	-
	(164)	(258)	(187)	(190)	(500)	(307)	(1603)

TABLE 2-18

Background Characteristics Reported by Students of Respondent and Non-respondent Mothers

Variable	Non-respondent Mothers (900)	Respondent Mothers (1778)
(Item: S 370)		
(a) Percent mothers low education (grade school only)	24**	22
	(821)	(1680)
(Item: S 363-64)		
(b) Father's occupation		
Farmer	1	1
Blue-collar	74	74
White-collar	25	26
	(709)	(1490)
(Item: S 353)		
(c) Percent intact families	63**	75
	(848)	(1694)
(Item: S 357)		
(d) Percent in town more than 10 years	55**	67
	(858)	(1707)
(Item: S 365)		
(e) Percent working mothers	53**	49
	(402)	(1714)

**Percentages came from cross-tabulations with chi-squares having $p < .001$ associated with them.

Besides the demographic differences reported in Table 2-18, other significant differences were found between students of responding mothers and students of non-responding mothers. Some of the more outstanding variables on which they differed were merely direct reflections of the demographic items already discussed (e.g., getting help about educational plans from parents). Others were more concerned with attitudes and performances in school. For example, students of responding mothers significantly more often reported getting better grades than students of non-responding mothers; students of non-responding mothers significantly more often said they chose to go to a vocational high school in order to be with friends.

These findings make it inappropriate to employ the data supplied by the responding mothers to represent all the mothers of the sample. Thus, when interpreting findings derived from the parents' questionnaires, it should be realized that they are somewhat more applicable to students who came from intact homes, are less mobile, and so forth.

III. Questionnaires

A. Nature of the Instruments

Questionnaires were used to collect data from three groups of respondents. Many items on the students' questionnaires were employed in the parents' and teachers' questionnaires. These structured instruments (see Appendix A) were designed to be self-administered. The students' and parents' questionnaires are discussed below.

Items were included to represent the following concerns:

		Student Questionnaire	Mother Questionnaire
(a)	Background characteristics	yes	yes
(b)	Values and attitudes	yes	yes
(c)	Future educational and occupational goals for the adolescent	yes	yes
(d)	Patterns of family interaction	yes	yes
(e)	Adolescent's behaviors and activities	yes	---
(f)	Adolescent's sociometric patterns	yes	---
(g)	The high school experience	yes	---
(h)	Experiences specific to vocational students	yes	yes

All the topics except (h) appeared in Kandel's (1968) questionnaire; accordingly, most items came from the previous questionnaires. As Kandel, et al. (1968) reported, most of the items in sections (f) and (g) were developed by Coleman in The Adolescent Society (1961); most of the family items in section (d) were from Bowerman and Elder (1964) and from a second study by Bowerman (personal communication to Kandel, et al., 1968). Items inappropriate for vocational students were revised or deleted, and many new questions were written to cover experiences peculiar to vocational high schools.[15] In addition, items intended for the vocational questionnaires were pretested extensively with vocational students.

B. Pretests of Items and Questionnaires

Students from three specialized vocational high schools in the Boston area participated in pretesting items during the summer and fall of 1966. Two were all-boys schools and one was an all-girls school. Project personnel administered test questionnaires to pairs of students and then interviewed them about the items and their responses.[16] The pretest sessions uncovered language conflicts, content errors, and construction weaknesses in the items. Occasionally, vocational students gave ideas for new items to the interviewers.

In November, 1966, questionnaires were pretested on the students, the parents, and the teachers of a medium-sized specialized vocational high school. The school was located in a large urban area; it enrolled about 85% Negro adolescents. The one-hour testing period proved ample time for almost all students to complete the questionnaire. During the administration, project personnel answered student questions and noted their difficulties for possible revisions. Moreover, students were instructed to mark difficult questions. The investigators had judged these were slow students and expected them to provide a rigorous test of the questionnaire. All in all, the pretesting was successful. Items were changed and dropped as a result of students' responses, omissions, and remarks. Beyond that, practice in administering, coding, keypunching, and processing the questionnaires was gained from the pretest. Only about a 30% response rate resulted from the single, mailed questionnaire sent to the mothers, so they provided less extensive information for revision.

C. Consistency of Student Responses

None of the traditional methods of estimating reliability were employed for the questionnaires of this study.[17] Instead, certain pairs of items in the student questionnaire were matched for the consistency of the students' responses to them. The items were paired because, essentially, they called for the same information; they were parallel items. For example, if a student indicated on Item 354-55 that he had no brothers or sisters, and if he checked Item 356 to show that he was a twin, he was presumed responding in an inconsistent pattern. Several possible explanations account for inconsistencies: (a) a random and careless response pattern, (b) misunderstanding the question, and (c) the existence of an "illogical" event. Care in constructing the questionnaire should have reduced misunderstanding to a minimum, and illogical events may be discounted as rarities. Thus, consistency mainly refers to the extent of students' careful answering of and attentiveness to the items.

---

[15] The majority of the items was written to be suitable for cross-cultural use with Danish data.

[16] Teachers were not present during any of the questionnaire administrations in this study.

[17] Kandel, et al. (1968) report reliability coefficients for their Danish questionnaires.

Table 2-19 presents the percentage of consistent student responses for five pairs of items from the questionnaire. The first two sets depend on factual information; the others tap beliefs, orientations, and values through alternative paraphrasing of ideas. For the factual sets of items, 96% of the students were consistent about whom they said they lived with and whether their homes were broken, while 99% were consistent about their birth order in the family and whether they had siblings. On the more subjective items, 85% of the students were consistent about whether their parents knew their friends at school, 76% gave consistent responses between the importance of being popular at school and the importance of being well-liked at school,[18] and 66% consistently responded about what they do when they disagree with their friends and when their friends want them to join them in doing something wrong.[19] These instances of consistency are reported as indicators of the dependability of student responses. We conclude that these indices (see Table 2-19) suggest that students responded to the instrument with a fairly high degree of consistency. Differences among the items' consistency values seem to be associated with the degree to which the items of a set duplicate each other. Indices (a) and (b) bespeak very high response consistency and are derived from items that are clearly logically comparable; index (c) marks high consistency but is somewhat lowered by semantics; (d) and (e) are moderate indices of consistent responses, being the two susceptible to greater semantic variability. An examination of the sets of items used in (c), (d), and (e) will show how they are slightly less isomorphic than (a) and (b).

---

[18] "Very important" and "somewhat important" were collapsed into one "important" category. (See Items 151 and 343 in the student questionnaire in Appendix A.)

[19] These items were split into "goes along with friends" and "decides for self." (See Items 344 and 448 in the student questionnaire in Appendix A.)

2

TABLE 2-19

Percent Consistent Responses by Students to Five Pairs of Items

Paired Items	Percent Consistent Responses
(a) People living with? (S 352) vs. Is home broken? (S 353)	96%
(b) Number of siblings? (S 354-5) vs. Birth order? (S 356)	99%
(c) Do parents know friends? (S 455) vs. Do parents like friends? (S 346)	85%
(d) Important to be popular in school? (S 151) vs. Important to be well-liked in school? (S 343)	76%
(e) Do you go along with friends: when you disagree with them? (S 344) vs. when they are not right? (S 448)	66%

D. Accuracy of Student Responses

To move from the students' consistency to their accuracy of response, student responses were matched with the mothers' answers to certain questions. These questions dealt with relatively factual and objective information on which the mother could be assumed an authority. For example, students and mothers reported the father's occupation. The percentage of times matched student-mother pairs agreed in their responses to an item was taken as a measure of the student's accuracy of report. Of course, an observed disagreement could result from an inaccurate mother's report and an accurate student's report; our measure is therefore a conservative estimate of the student's accuracy.

The percent agreements between mothers and students on four background items are shown in Table 2-20. As noted, the observed agreement proportions were markedly greater than those expected from assuming the mothers' and students' responses to be independent. Mothers and sons agreed most often (83%) about whether the mother was employed and how much; they agreed least often (66%) about mother's education. On the number of years they had lived in the community and father's occupation, they agreed 77% and 70%, respectively. If one is willing to accept the mother's response as the criterion or the "true" response, these fairly high percentages of mother-child agreement on certain variables represent a high degree of accuracy of the students' questionnaires.

Tables 2-21 and 2-22 provide another means of estimating the accuracy of the students' responses. Three groups of students were formed using their responses to three items (S177, 337, and 441) that asked them to indicate whose opinion about a problem they would respect more: (a) a teacher's or a friend's, (b) a teacher's or a parent's, (c) a parent's or a friend's. Students who preferred their teacher's opinions over their friends' and their parents' opinions comprise the teacher-oriented group. Parent- and friend-oriented groups are defined similarly. Thus, we found that most students, according to their own reports, could be characterized as being most influenced by one of the three sets of persons or roles with whom they interacted daily. More explicitly, 76% of the students (2335) were clearly teacher-, parent-, or friend-oriented, 20% (603) were not classified because they failed to respond to all three items, and only 4% of the students responded to the three items inconsistently (e.g., a>b, b>c, and c>a). This very low (4%) rate of responding inconsistently to these three items supports our earlier evidence for suggesting that most students answered the questionnaire reliably.

If the students answered their questionnaires accurately and expressed their real feelings, orientations, and experiences, we could reasonably expect certain differences to exist among the three groups. For example, we expected parent-oriented students to be swayed appreciably

TABLE 2-20

Percentage of Agreements Between Students and Mothers on Four Background Variables

Variable	Percent Student-Mother Agreement	
	Observed	Expected[1]
(a) Years in community (S 357 vs. P 123)	***77%	55%
(b) Is mother employed (S 365 vs. P 128)	***83%	38%
(c) Mother's education (S 370 vs. P 149)	***66%	27%
(d) Father's occupation (S 363-64 vs. P 132-33)	***70%	31%

[1] The expected proportions of student-mother agreement are found by dividing the sum of the expected frequencies of the cells on the principal diagonal by the total N for a given contingency table. We established the significance of the differences between observed and expected proportions of agreement for each item by the method reported in Ferguson (1959, pp. 146-48). For the smallest difference between observed and expected proportions (a), $z = 13.75$ (*** $P < .001$).

TABLE 2-21

Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Students' Responses on Items About Which Predictions Based on Their Orientations Were Made

	Teacher Oriented		Parent Oriented		Student Oriented	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Variable	N= (241)	(116)	(1076)	(614)	(152)	[illegible]
(a) (Item: S114) Percent who said mothers helped decide their trade	45 %***	60 %***	54	76	35	[illegible]
(b) (Item: S115) Percent who said father helped decide their trade	43***	23***	62	41	35	[illegible]
(c) (Item: S118) Percent who said friend helped decide their trade	35***	48 *	38	43	53	53
(d) (Item: S120) Percent who said teacher helped decide their trade	25	34 **	22	25	18	[illegible]
(e) (Item: S138) Percent who said being with friend was very important for choosing to go to vocational high school	4**	14*	7	14	13	[illegible]

(Table Continued)

TABLE 2-21 (Cont.)

	Teacher Oriented		Parent Oriented		Student Oriented	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
Variable	N= (241)	(116)	(1076)	(614)	(152)	(136)
(f) (Item: S141) Percent who said parents' wishes were important for choosing to go to vocational high school	50 ***	54 ***	61	69	40	52
(g) Percent describing teacher as:						
(Item: S210) Friendly	69***	71*	66	75	49	65
(Item S213) Understanding	35***	60 ***	40	47	25	35

The probabilities of the chi squares for the contingency tables (with person orientation as independent variable): *$p<.05$, **$p<.01$, ***$p<.001$

TABLE 2-22

Responses of Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Students to What They Think is Important to Strive for While in High School

Variable	Teacher Oriented		Parent Oriented		Friend Oriented	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
(Item: S319) Pleasing parents	20%***	15%***	35%	39%	19%	20%
(Item: S320) Learning as much as possible in school	57	47	40	31	25	22
(Item: S321) Living up to my religious ideals	8	19	11	19	9	13
(Item: S322) Being accepted and liked by other students	15	19	14	12	47	45
Total N	232	114	1028	583	146	130

***The separate 3 x 4 contingency tables for each sex on this item had chi-squares with $\underline{p} < .001$.

more often by their parents on what trade to study than the teacher-oriented or friend-oriented students. Similarly, teacher-oriented students should be influenced more often by teachers and friend-oriented students by friends in deciding what trade to study. In almost all instances, the results (shown in Tables 2-21a, b, c, d) support these expectations.

Another suggestion of accuracy of response is that friend-oriented students would say considerably more often that being with their friends was a very important factor affecting their decision to attend a vocational high school. Clearly, the highest percentage who said being with friends was very important in their decision belongs to the friend-oriented students (see Table 2-21e). Conversely, of the three groups, parent-oriented students (Table 2-21f) met our expectations by stating most frequently that their parents' wishes for them to attend a vocational high school were important for their decision to do so.

A third expected difference was that teacher-oriented students would most often describe their teachers in positive terms. Table 2-21g shows that both teacher-oriented students and parent-oriented students reported their teachers to be friendly and understanding more often than did friend-oriented students.

Finally, Table 2-22 presents the distributions of students' descriptions of the most important thing for them to strive for in high school. We predicted three of the four choices for this item to be distinctly associated with the three types of students. Specifically, parent-oriented students were expected to choose "pleasing parents" most often, teacher-oriented students were expected to predominate on "learning as much as possible in school," and friend-oriented students were predicted to outnumber the other two groups on "being accepted and liked by other students." Table 2-22 discloses that all of these expectations about the teacher-, parent-, and friend-oriented students were clearly supported for both boys and girls.

Thus, by using appropriate items from the questionnaire to demonstrate the construct validity of the person-orientation responses (teacher-, parent-, friend-oriented students), we hoped to provide further documentation that the students responded accurately to the questionnaire items. The sizeable degree to which predictions concerning teacher-, parent-, and friend-oriented students' responses to other items were verified is further evidence that the students answered many items accurately.

IV. Procedures

The data were collected from the students, parents, and teachers in March, 1967. Student questionnaires were administered by a principal investigator and teams of project personnel. Teacher questionnaires and stamped, return-addressed envelopes were distributed through the school mailboxes. On the days students were completing their questionnaires, parent questionnaires were mailed out. For all three groups, the study was presented as one aimed at learning about the interests and attitudes of vocational high school students. The instructions on the questionnaires (see Appendix A) and the letters to the mothers and teachers (see Appendix B) assured anonymity and confidentiality to all respondents.

In the larger schools, students filled out questionnaires in large groups; regular classrooms were used to administer the questionnaires in the smaller schools. In all schools, only project personnel administered the questionnaires to the students during the one-hour periods arranged for this task by the schools. For School 71, it was necessary to administer the instruments on two separate but consecutive days because of that school's class schedule. One day sufficed for the other five schools. The student absent rates for the six schools have been reported in Table 2-1. The largest absentee rate was 9.1% for School 76. Thus, the six schools' populations were almost totally represented in our sample.

Lists of parents' and teachers' names and addresses were supplied by each school. Both parents and teachers were asked to return their completed questionnaires by mail in enclosed envelopes. Second and third reminder letters were sent to parents and teachers if they failed to respond after two or three week intervals. The third and final follow-up letter also contained a questionnaire. Lists of addresses of envelopes never reaching addresses were returned to the schools for verification. Corrected envelopes were then sent out. Letters of explanation to the parents and the teachers soliciting their cooperation in a study of vocational schools and promising them anonymity accompanied their questionnaires (see Appendix B). Table 2-2 shows the overall return rate for parents was 67%; the return rate for teachers (Table 2-3) was 78%. The return rates of mailed questionnaires for parents are quite high for the six schools, ranging from 50% to 87%. Interestingly enough, the two Southeastern states had the lowest return rates. These low rates were largely the result of high mobility rates in these states. Table 2-17d lends support to this assertion; Dixport (61%) and South City (58%) had the fewest mothers living in their communities more than ten years.

Chapter 3

Specialized Vocational High-School Students: Stereotypes I

How do students decide to go to vocational school, what kinds of experiences do they have while they are there, and what plans and goals do they formulate about their lives after high school? These are the questions that need to be answered before we can deal effectively with the negative, dumping-ground stereotype that has evolved about specialized vocational high schools. In this chapter, we often refer to specialized vocational students simply as vocational students or, even less specifically, as students. It is important to remember that we deal here exclusively with information about vocational students attending specialized vocational high schools.

To explore what it is like to participate in a specialized vocational education program we asked questions about three broad areas of experience of the vocational student:

1. The people, conditions, and ideas that influenced the students to enter vocational high school and a particular program or trade within it. This chapter looks at the distributions of these influences, examining the relative importance of various reasons for choosing to go to a vocational high school.

2. The students' perceptions of the training, services, and interpersonal interactions in the vocational high school, as well as the students' valuations of these experiences. Students were asked to indicate their satisfaction with various aspects of their vocational education and their perceptions of their scholastic performance. Since there is much impressionistic speculation about how vocational students orient toward doing well in school, the aim here was to learn their actual views of being "scholarly" and studious.

3. The students' post-high school plans. Since vocational schools supposedly provide terminal education for most of their students, we asked about the degree to which vocational students desired to continue their education, what forms this continuation might take, and what other roles in society were aspired to by these students.

Thus, the sections of this chapter have something to say:

I. On Becoming a Vocational Student

II. On Being a Vocational Student, and

III. On Going Beyond Vocational High School.

For several reasons, information about vocational students is presented for boys and girls separately. First, the general experiential differences of the two sexes in vocational education call for separate analyses. Second, boys and girls do not share many trade programs in vocational schools. Finally, the condition that approximately two-thirds of the sample is boys and one-third is girls seemed to negate pooling their results.

In summary, the analyses here provide a general, descriptive perspective of vocational students' experiences and conditions. Later chapters touch on these same experiences and conditions in a more detailed fashion, including comparisons with students enrolled in other programs of study and examining variables in this chapter in relation to other variables. The present purpose, however, is to make an unencumbered, initial investigation of some of the considerations that brought the student to vocational high school, his experiences and orientations while there, and his aspirations for when he leaves high school.

I. On Becoming a Vocational Student

Why do adolescents decide to go to a specialized vocational high school? What is the relative importance of their various reasons? We asked students to respond to eight different considerations -- found in pretests to be commonly employed by vocational students in deciding to attend a vocational high school -- by checking that each was either very, somewhat, or not important.

Table 3-1 shows the percentage of boys and girls who indicated that one or more of the eight reasons were very important in deciding to go to a vocational high school. Overwhelmingly chosen as very important by both boys (82%) and girls (81%) was "to learn a trade," reflecting the very practical bent of these students.

Although mentioned considerably less often than learning a trade as very important, the items next most frequently mentioned by students involve either informal knowledge of a vocational high school or the

TABLE 3-1

Importance of Various Factors that Helped Students Decide to Attend a Vocational High School

(Items:S138-45)

Factors	Percent Saying Very Important Boys	 Girls
.	(1981)	(1079)
1. To be with friends	7%	16%
2. To learn a trade	82	81
3. Studies are easier	9	9
4. Parents wanted me to	21	24
5. Adult friend suggested it	8	7
6. Teacher or guidance counselor suggested it	14	19
7. Know graduates of a vocational high school	21	26
8. Liked school's reputation	28	37

urgings of some older person. Thus, much weight is given to liking a school's reputation (boys 28%; girls 37%) and to knowing a graduate of a school (boys 21%; girls 26%). Parents are mentioned only somewhat more frequently (boys 21%; girls 24%) than teachers and guidance counselors (boys 14%; girls 19%) as adults influencing entrance into vocational high school.

Considerably weaker are reasons of "to be with friends" (boys 7%; girls 16%) and "studies are easier" (boys 9%; girls 9%). The fact that relatively few students report having given major importance to friends and easy studies in deciding on a vocational-school education indicates that more pragmatic objectives were given greater weight in their decisions.

Two sex-differentiating themes appear in Table 3-1: twice as many girls (16%) as boys (7%) felt that being with friends is a very important reason for going to a vocational high school, and girls also more often place greater importance on knowing people who graduated from a vocational high school and knowing about a school's reputation in making up their minds about vocational schools. These differences suggest that the girls were more interested in first-hand and peer-experienced information about the school they were going to attend than were the boys, perhaps giving more consideration to providing themselves with an amiable and congenial school environment. However, this greater interest in the personal suitability of a new environment on the part of the girls is not associated with their giving less weight than boys to the occupationally-relevant characteristics of the vocational school.

Who helps students decide on the trades or programs they selected to pursue? To what extent are different people instrumental in the student's choice of trade? This information was obtained by asking the students to indicate people who had helped them to decide on a trade to study. These percentages of mentions are shown in Table 3-2. Parents are the most frequently mentioned. Moreover, there apparently is a sex-linked differential dependence on mothers and fathers. Girls are much more often helped by their mothers (69%) than by their fathers (35%), whereas boys are only slightly more often helped by their fathers (55%) than by their mothers (50%). It seems reasonable to find parents more often helping their child of the same sex. Perhaps this is less clearly the case for the boys than for the girls because homes without fathers are more prevalent and the boys were forced to rely on thier mothers for help. However, it may also be a consequence of women playing more dominant and pervasive guiding roles in the American family. In any event, the importance of parents as peple upon whom students rely heavily for making vocational decisions is clear.

TABLE 3-2

Persons Who Helped Students Decide What Trade to Study

(Items:S114-23)

Influential Persons	Percent Mentioning Person	
	Boys	Girls
	(1981)	(1079)
1. Mother	50%	69%
2. Father	55	35
3. Sibling	19	32
4. Other Relative	40	46
5. Friend	8	5
6. Teacher	22	26
7. Guidance Counselor	32	40
8. Other Adult	19	19
9. Trade School Representative	11	9

Siblings, other relatives, teachers, and guidance counselors are all mentioned appreciably more often by girls than by boys; indeed, girls mention other relatives and guidance counselors more often than they mention their fathers. There are many seemingly disparate explanations for this finding. However, each explanation may be reduced to the same conclusion. The conclusion implies that the girls seem to "prefer" to take a less active role in making their decisions about which trade program to enter, relying more on several sources of advice.

Friends are seldom considered helpful in deciding which trade to elect at school. Only a very small percentage of boys (8%) and an even smaller percentage of girls (5%) relied on their friends for help in making so important a choice.

The figures (about 10%) indicating the role of trade school representatives in helping to decide which trade to enter fairly accurately represent students' responses in five of the six schools in the sample. School 72's students, however, reported receiving substantially more help from a trade school representative (boys 32%; girls 38%). This difference among the schools suggests the relative effectiveness of trained school officials who are supposed to be influencing the decisions of students. In most instances, the trade school representative serves as a recruiter for his school. Evidently, the representative from school 72 doubled as someone who guided students into particular programs or trades.

In addition to the people who influenced their decision about which trade to take up, vocational students were questioned about the other influences that helped them decide on a trade. Table 3-3 lists the percentage of mentions of influences that helped students decide what trade to study, two types of replies receiving many mentions by both boys and girls. One of these types reflects the intrinsic or personal characteristics of the student, whereas the other depends on the extrinsic or objective factors surrounding an occupation. Long-time interest (boys 46%; girls 54%) and own ability (boys 46%; girls 47%) are the influences of an intrinsic or personal nature that are most frequently mentioned. Job opportunities (boys 45%; girls 45%) and wages (boys 47%; girls 30%) are the extrinsic or objective things most frequently mentioned.

Family tradition figures least prominently among influences upon deciding on a trade, being chosen by less than ten percent of both boys and girls. The considerable influence of parents on choosing a trade (see Table 3-2) apparently does not often stem from upholding family tradition.

TABLE 3-3

Influential Things that Helped Students Decide What Trade to Study

(Items:S124-30)

Influential Things	Percent Mentioning Category Boys	Percent Mentioning Category Girls
	(1981)	(1079)
1. Family Tradition	9%	8%
2. Job Experience	19	17
3. Long-time Interest	46	54
4. Own Ability	46	47
5. Books and Magazines	16	13
6. Job Opportunities	45	45
7. Wages	47	30

The very limited use of written materials (boys 16%, girls 13%) may be due to a lack of usage on the part of students, a meager distribution of materials, a concentration of materials in several trade areas with none in other areas, the ineffectiveness or unpersuasiveness of the materials themselves, or the impersonality of these sources.

There is one glaring sex difference in Table 3-3: boys disproportionately more often select wages than girls as something influencing them to enter a trade. An awareness of social roles might readily account for this difference, but beyond this explanation, a theme appears which considers other differences in Table 3-3. Girls favor long-time interest, a more intrinsic or personal reason, whereas boys more often select the more measurable of the extrinsic reasons, wages. This preference for subjective things and social approval as determinants of behavior by girls, and for tangible things as determinants of behavior by boys, is also hinted at in the fact that boys choose books and magazines slightly more often than girls. The current sex-difference finding seems to share the same conceptual foundation as the one in Table 3-2, suggesting that girls are more often dependent on other persons for help in making decisions. In that instance, the source of help is people, whereas the data in Table 3-3 refer to influences of personal experiences or preferences. The relation between the two sets of sex-difference findings appears to be that girls are more affected by personal and interpersonal influences while boys are more dependent on operational and instrumental considerations in making their decisions. Later analyses may also reveal this instrumental-interpersonal difference between the sexes in the data.

II. On Being a Vocational Student

A. Valuations of Vocational High School Experiences

This section and the next deal with two different, but related, aspects of the experiences of vocational high school students, (1) the valuations students place on their programs, their training, the help they receive from the school, and other related segments of their school life, and (2) the scholastic performances of vocational students from their own points of view. Background information against which to assess the students' responses to these two experiential aspects of vocational education is provided in Table 3-1, where the responses indicate that the large majority of them elected to go to a vocational school for the very practical reason of learning a trade. We want to learn how they feel about what was done to help them attain this goal.

Table 3-1 also presents figures showing that only a very small portion of students choose to enter a vocational high school in order to escape to easier studies. Thus, one can expect somewhat positive orientations toward scholastic endeavors and a serious appreciation for shop work from these students. This is investigated in the next section.

Table 3-4a shows the percentage of students who are in the trade they want to learn and those who are not. Only 14% of the boys and 20% of the girls feel they are not studying the trades they want. Why a good deal more girls than boys are not in the trade they want to be in is not clear.

Eighty-six percent of the boys and 89% of the girls rate their trade programs in the schools as being at least high-status ones (Table 3-4b). However, there is some down-grading of status for the trades when students give their views of how others in the school rate their programs (Table 3-4c). Only a small minority of the vocational students feel that they are in a trade program with inferior status.

Table 3-4d presents the extent to which students are satisfied with the vocational training they are receiving. Ninety percent of the boys and 93% of the girls are at least satisfied with the training they receive. About half of these students indicate they are very satisfied. Once again, there is only a small percentage, less than 10% of the students, who are dissatisfied with their training.

The students were asked to indicate their primary sources of satisfaction at their school (Table 3-4e); a clear sex differentiation emerges. Shop experience is frequently chosen by the boys (51%) as most satisfying. The girls, on the other hand, choose shop only 17% of the time, and indicate that most satisfying to them are the "people in the school" (45%). Boys choose "people" only 19% of the time. These findings lend support to the fundamental sex-difference concept advanced earlier: the boys show a preference for the instrumental, operational choice, while the girls more often find satisfaction in the choice that represents interpersonal and personal experiences. Responses to "finding a purpose in life" by the boys (10%) and girls (19%) lend further support to the interpretation that a basically personal mode of satisfaction is more often preferred by girls.

Only a very small percentage of students of either sex choose academic studies or extracurricular activities as most satisfying experiences (Table 3-4e). Finally, a very small percentage of students (6%) are unable to say that anything gives them a lot of satisfaction.

Table 3-4f presents the students' responses when asked how satisfying it is for them to work hard in school. The same picture emerges here that is found with other questions about satisfaction with other

TABLE 3-4

Students' Responses to Items Concerning Their Satisfaction with Vocational High School Experiences

	Boys	Girls
	(1981)	(1079)
(a) (Item:S112) Percent taking the trade they wanted to learn	86%	80%
(b) (Item:S173) How do they rate their programs in school?		
Very high status	34%	33%
High status	52	58
Low status	12	8
Very low status	2	1
(c) (Item:S174) How do they feel others rate their programs in school?		
Very high status	19%	26%
High status	62	62
Low status	16	11
Very low status	3	2
(d) (Item:S137) Satisfaction with training received in school		
Very satisfied	41%	44%
Satisfied	49	49
Dissatisfied	8	6
Very dissatisfied	2	1

(Table continued)

TABLE 3-4

(Continued)

	Boys	Girls
	(1981)	(1079)
(e) (Item:S136) What has given most satisfaction at school?		
1. Academic studies	4%	6%
2. Shop	51	17
3. Extra-curricular activities	9	8
4. People in the school	19	45
5. Finding a purpose in life	10	19
6. Nothing	6	6
(f) (Item:S146) How satisfying is it for you to work hard in school?		
Extremely satisfying	26%	35%
Satisfying	65	61
Not satisfying	6	4
Unpleasant	3	1
(g) (Item:S172) Satisfaction about help with future plans from school staff?		
Very satisfied	27%	31%
Satisfied	43	44
Dissatisfied	8	6
Very dissatisfied	3	2
Haven't asked for help	18	17

aspects of vocational school. Over 90% of boys and girls report working hard in school to be satisfying or extremely satisfying; only a few students express dissatisfaction about working hard in school.

Vocational students were asked to report their satisfaction with the help they receive from the school staff in making their future plans (Table 3-4g). About one-fifth of the students never sought help, but among those who did, many more are satisfied (boys, 71%; girls, 75%) than dissatisfied (boys, 11%; girls, 8%).

Also relevant to the issue of student satisfaction are the students' and teachers' reactions to the important issue of whether vocational students are "better off" in vocational programs in regular high schools than in separate vocational high schools (Table 3-5). About 66% of the boys and 72% of the girls prefer the separate vocational high school experience to that of a regular high school, and an even greater percentage of the teachers (82%) would rather have vocational students attend a separate vocational high school. A greater proportion of academic teachers (23%) favor regular schools than shop teachers (10%). Fewer male vocational students (27%) who prefer regular high schools plan to continue their education than male vocational students (35%) who plan to continue their education. Further, those who prefer vocational schools significantly ($p < .001$) more often report (80%) having high grades than students who prefer regular high schools (59%). (Data for the last three findings are not shown.) Since this item is one of the last in the questionnaire, the non-response rate was high, with only three-quarters of the students responding. Thus, it is likely that the relatively high percentage of students who prefer the regular school setting is due to the greater number of more able students responding to this item.

Beyond the students' satisfaction with their vocational high school experiences, how do others in their social and educational communities view vocational education? Teachers were asked how satisfied they are with the way regular high-school teachers regard vocational high schools (Table 3-6), and their responses were decidedly one-sided. A large majority of the vocational school teachers, about 70%, report being dissatisfied with the attitudes of regular high school teachers toward vocational high schools. Only 30% of the vocational teachers feel that vocational schools are regarded in a satisfactory manner by regular school teachers. Admittedly, this item is weak; we do not know how the vocational teachers think regular high-school teachers regard vocational high schools. We only suppose what seems reasonable: that vocational teachers would only, or mainly, be satisfied with having regular teachers hold their schools in high esteem. Thus, being dissatisfied would mean that they feel vocational schools are not held in high regard by regular high-school teachers.

TABLE 3-5

How Students and Teachers Feel About Specialized vs. Regular Vocational High School Training

(Items:S458 & T229

	Boys	Girls	Teachers
	(1981)	(1079)	(173)
Regular high school vocational program is better than separate vocational high school program			
Strongly agree	10%	7%	6%
Agree	24	21	12
Disagree	40	52	39
Strongly disagree	26	20	44
N Respondents[1]	(1481)	(880)	(170)

---

[1] This item was on the last page of the questionnaire. Thus, slower students were less able to respond to it.

TABLE 3-6

Vocational High School Teachers' Satisfaction with Regular High School Teachers' Views of Vocational High Schools

(Item:T230)

	Percent of Teachers
	(173)
Satisfaction with regular high school teachers' regard for vocational high school	
Very satisfied	1%
Satisfied	29
Dissatisfied	50
Very dissatisfied	21

To summarize, the large majority of vocational students repeatedly have expressed a good deal of satisfaction with their experiences in vocational high schools. More specifically, (a) most of the students (boys, 86%; girls, 80%) are taking the trades they want to learn, (b) most programs are viewed by the students as enjoying high statuses (boys, 87%; girls, 90%); (c) both boys (90%) and girls (93%) are quite satisfied with the training they are receiving; (d) only a handful of students (boys, 6%; girls, 6%) find nothing to be satisfied with in their vocational schools; (e) most students enjoy working hard in school (boys, 91%; girls, 95%); and (f) a great portion of the students (boys, 71%; girls, 75%) are pleased with the help with future plans they receive from the school staff. It was also found that most of the students (boys, 66%; girls 72%) and teachers (82%) favor vocational education in a separate vocational school to vocational education in a regular high school. In spite of this widespread satisfaction with the vocational high school experience from within, there is reason to believe that some outside the vocational school do not hold it in high regard. Seventy percent of the vocational school teachers report not being satisfied with the reputation of vocational schools among regular high-school teachers.

B. Students' Views of Their Scholastic Performance

This section examines scholastic performance among vocational students: time spent on homework, grade performance, the importance of excelling at one's trade, ability to work well with others, and attitudes toward fellow students who are serious about their studies (Table 3-7).

At least one-half to one hour of homework is reported (boys, 71% girls, 87%) to be done outside of school by the majority of students (Table 3-7a). The item stresses homework outside of school because principals report that it is common practice to have vocational students do homework assignments in school. At any rate, relatively few boys (29%) and even fewer girls (13%) report doing no homework outside of school. Table 3-7a shows clearly that more girls than boys spend more time on homework, probably in part because girls are in trades that lend themselves to practice at home.

Grades are used widely as the ultimate index of scholastic performance of students. Table 3-7b shows the students' self-reported grade standings for their respective classes. These grades have not been checked against those in the records. They are useful and informative in that they represent the students' self-perceptions. The distributions in Table 3-7b reveal the expected clustering in the middle quarters or categories. Students are reluctant to place themselves

TABLE 3-7

Students' Responses to Items About Their Performances in Vocational High School Settings

	Boys (1981)	Girls (1079)
(a) (Item:S113) Average time spent on homework outside school		
None or almost none	29%	13%
About 1/2 to 1 hour a day	52	51
About 1 1/2 to 2 hours a day	16	31
3 or more hours a day	3	4
(b) (Item:S135) Self-reported average high school grades		
Top quarter of class	15%	15%
Second quarter of class	39	44
Third quarter of class	39	36
Lowest quarter of class	8	5
(c) (Items:S153 & S159) Importance of being good at trade	(Percent saying very important)	
For self	85%	83%
For others	58	57

(Table continued)

TABLE 3-7

(Continued)

	Boys (1981)	Girls (1079)
(d) (Item:S314) Is effort in shop work more or less when working with other students?		
Much more	23%	23%
Somewhat more	26	31
About the same	42	42
Somewhat less	8	4
Much less	2	1
(e) (Item:S315) Attitude toward student who is serious about being a top student?		
Approve very much	46%	51%
Approve	49	44
Disapprove	4	4
Disapprove very much	2	1

in the upper or lower quarters of their classes, and so they bunch in the middle with a tendency to overload toward the top-half of the scale. On the whole, these distributions appear to be reasonably realistic accounts of grade assignments.

How important do vocational students feel it is for them to be good at their trades and how important do they feel it is for their fellow students? (Table 3-7c). Only the responses of students saying it is very important are shown. Practically all the students (boys, 85%; girls, 83%) say it is very important for them to be good at their trades. However, fewer students (boys, 58%; girls, 57%) report that other students share this desire to be good at their trades. This discrepancy suggests that most students feel they should do very well at their trades, but they are not likely to let other students know how seriously they take their trade preparations. In any event, the finding that it is very important to be good at one's trade is consistent with the earlier finding (see Table 3-1) that most students enter vocational high school to learn a trade.

When asked about how well they work together with each other at their shop work, about 48% of the boys and 54% of the girls say they put more care and effort into their work than when they work alone (Table 3-7d). Of the remaining students, about 42% say they work as well with another student as when alone, and only a few students indicate that their work suffers when working with other students. Most vocational students, then, rather than seeking isolation, seem to do better work when they are involved with their fellows. The results of Table 3-7d also lend further support to the interpersonal orientation of the girls. Six percent more girls (54%) than boys (48%) say their work improves as a result of working in shop with another student.

In a final look at how vocational students view their scholastic performance, they were asked how they feel toward a student who is serious about becoming a top student. Table 3-7e shows almost complete approval for a student who is serious about and wants to excel in his studies. Approximately 95% of both sexes approve or very much approve of a serious fellow student.

The results of questions pertaining directly and indirectly to scholastic performance produce a picture of the vocational student as someone who (1) wants to get good grades, (2) does his homework to get them, (3) works well with his fellow shop students. Vocational students also profess that it is very important for them to be good at their trades and that they wholly approve of others who want to be excellent students.

III. On Going Beyond Vocational High School

This section deals with the vocational students' plans beyond high school education. Ostensibly, vocational education purports to provide a student with a skill that will enable him to get a job upon graduating. How many students aspire to further their education after vocational school and in what ways do they intend to do this? What expectations do vocational students hold concerning the pay arrangements they seek for the jobs they hope to get upon leaving high school? The types of pay arrangements preferred may yield insights into vocational students' abilities to delay or postpone gratification.

Earlier results (Tables 3-1 and 3-7) implied that vocational students are exceptionally serious about their vocational education. Those results are supported in Table 3-8a. Ninety-six percent of both the boys and the girls say that they plan to finish high school.

Students also were asked what they planned to do after they left high school(Table 3-8b). About one-third of the boys and one - quarter of the girls responding to this item express a desire to continue their education. Another one-third of the boys say they would enter the military. The last third of the boys feel that they would continue their trades by getting a job (25%) or entering an apprenticeship (8%). The greatest number of girls (60%) reply that they would get a job upon leaving school. Many more girls (11%) than boys (3%) filled in the open-ended "other" choice for this item, perhaps anticipating marriage and housework after leaving high school.

Table 3-8c presents the vocational students' aspirations for continuing their education. Almost 40% of the boys and more than one-half (55%) of the girls responding to this item clearly indicate that they do not plan to continue their educations beyond high school. For the boys, some 55% say that they expect to continue their education by going to and completing either a technical institute, a two-year college, or a four-year college; for the girls, about 37% choose these same forms of continued education. The important observation in Table 3-8c is that it demonstrates that a substantial proportion of vocational students, especially boys, aspire to go beyond high school and attend institutions of higher learning. Learning a trade, and entering it immediately after high school, is not the termination of their educational aspirations for a large number of vocational students.

Anticipating that vocational students expect to get jobs immediately after high school, students were asked to choose the kinds of pay arrangements they preferred (Table 3-9). Many of the boys (47%) and a clear majority of the girls (68%) say they would prefer to receive an

TABLE 3-8

Students' Plans After Vocational High School

	Boys (1981)	Girls (1079)
(a) (Item:S453) Plan to finish high school?		
Yes	96%	96%
No	2	1
Undecided	2	3
	(1590)	(943)
(b) (Item:S456) Plans after high school?		
Get a job	25%	60%
Go into military service	32	3
Enter apprenticeship	8	1
Continue education	32	25
Other	3	11
	(1495)	(900)
(c) (Item:S457) Highest level of education students hope to complete		
Technical institute	24%	11%
Two-year college	14	12
Four-year college	16	14
Graduate school	7	3
Do not plan to continue	38	55
	(1380)	(820)

TABLE 3-9

Students' Response Choices to Three Jobs with Differing Delay of Gratification Requirements

	Boys (1981)	Girls (1079)
(Item:S338)		
Type of pay arrangement for job		
Average from the start	47%	68%
Low first 2 years, high afterwards	39	26
Very low first 4 years, very high afterwards	19	7
	(1935)	(1059)

average pay as soon as they start work. However, more than half of the boys (53%) and the rest of the girls (32%) feel that they could wait two to four years, with low and very low salaries, to receive much higher pay afterwards, suggesting the ability to delay gratification in favor of future reward. Thus, the majority of male vocational students and about one-third of the female vocational students do not display preferences for pay arrangements that could be characterized as seeking immediate fulfillment.

Table 3-9 however, does contain a dramatic sex difference: girls are clearly less often inclined to postpone earning more money than are boys. Twenty percent more girls than boys opt to start earning as much money as they can as soon as they can. One obvious explanation for this finding is that many girls expect to get married soon after high school and want to realize their peak earnings immediately.

To review, (1) practically all the vocational students (96%) say they plan to finish high school; (b) after high school, one-third of the boys say they want to continue their education, another third say they want to go into the military, and the last third express a desire to either get a job or enter an apprenticeship, presumably in the trade they are learning in high school. Twenty-five percent of the girls want to continue their education, 60% hope to get a job, and most of the rest of the girls (11%) indicate "other" plans; (c) when asked about the highest level of education they hope to complete, 55% of the boys and 37% of the girls make one of three choices: technical institute, two-year college, or four-year college, indicating that many vocational students do not view high school educations as terminal; (d) finally, most male vocational students respond that they are willing to forego making an average amount of money right after high school for the chance of making much more several years later. This last finding is also true for one-third of the girls. Getting married soon after high school for girls was advanced as an explanation for this sex difference among vocational students.

IV. Summary.

This chapter examines the "dumping ground" stereotype associated with vocational schools by asking how students decide to attend vocational schools, what experiences they have while they are there, and where they see themselves going after high school. Our findings negate the stereotype.

In looking at the process of becoming a vocational student, one finding is that over 80% of the boys and girls chose to go to a specialized vocational high school "to learn a trade," suggesting a very practical orientation among these students. More frivolous reasons, such as "to be with friends" (boys, 7%; girls, 16%) and "studies are easier" (boys and girls, 9%) were infrequently cited by students.

Of the persons helping students decide on a trade to enter, parents and other adults were reported to be influential many more times than friends, who barely received mention on this important matter. Wages, job opportunities, ability, and interest predominated as important practical influences on students' trade decisions.

The results of asking what it is like being a vocational student indicate that a large majority of the students are at least satisfied with vocational schools and feel it is very important for them to work hard at succeeding in their chosen trades; very few are not in the trade they want. Only a very few are not satisfied or not serious about their vocational education. Furthermore, two-thirds of the boys and 72% of the girls feel that separate vocational high schools, and not vocational programs in regular or comprehensive high schools, are better for vocational students; 82% of the teachers share this feeling. These students (95%) approve of their fellow students being serious about working hard and doing well in school.

Going beyond vocational high school to higher education is aspired to by one-third of the boys and one-quarter of the girls, indicating that many vocational students do not see high school education as terminal.

Our findings do not support the "dumping-ground" stereotype for this sample of specialized vocational high schools. Rather than being dumped and bored, the results suggest that specialized vocational high school students, for the most part, are serious, satisfied, and achievement-oriented. They prefer separate vocational schools to learn their trades; they vie with one another to enter these schools, as evidenced by the relatively low student selection ratio (about one-third reported by principals) used in vocational schools. The dumping ground stereotype may have some validity for certain vocational schools in our great urban centers. Looking at the results in a positive vein, it appears that specialized vocational high schools actually provide at least a satisfactory setting and education for most of their students.

Chapter 4

Stereotypes About Person-Orientation Among Vocational Students

American high school students have been characterized (e.g., Braham, 1965; Coleman, 1961; Smith, 1962; Tannenbaum, 1962) as predominantly and excessively peer-oriented, and anti-adult and anti-scholarly attitudes are associated with this peer-orientation. These sterotypes are examined among vocational students in this chapter, using the "person-orientation" types for which construct validity was presented in Chapter II.

Two issues surrounding the peer-orientation stereotype are discussed here: (a) the extant of peer-orientation among adolescents and (b) how peer-oriented and adult-oriented adolescents differ in school achievement, adolescent personality, and attitudes toward parents and peers. Person-orientation refers to the preference of students for one group of persons (teachers, parents, or peers) rather than the other two groups on three items in the questionnaire, e.g., a "parent-oriented" adolescent says he respects his parents' opinions more than his teachers' and his friends' opinions. The three items combined to identify these orientations were:

S177. When you are faced with a decision that either friends or teachers could help you with, whose opinions do you respect more? (check one.)

1 --- friends' opinions   2 --- teachers' opinions

S337. When you are faced with a decision that either teachers or parents could help you with, whose opinions do you respect more? (check one.)

1 --- teachers' opinions   2 --- parents' opinions

S441. When you are faced with a decision that either parents or friends could help you with, whose opinions do you respect more? (check one.)

1 --- parents' opinions   2 --- friends' opinions

We found parents to be the most influential persons in the lives of vocational students (Tables 3-1, 3-2, and 4-1). Consequently, their views of vocational education and the educational aspirations held by parents for vocational students are presented in the last section of this chapter.

I. Prevalence of Peer-Orientation Among Vocational Students

Table 4-1 shows the percentage of boys and girls designated as teacher-, parent-, and friend-oriented on the basis of their responses to the three items which determine adolescent person-orientation. Clearly,

TABLE 4-1

Distributions of Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents by Sex

	Teacher-Oriented	Parent-Oriented	Friend-Oriented
Boys	17% (242)	73% (1078)	10% (152)
Girls	13% (116)	71% (614)	16% (136)

most boys (73%) and girls (71%) are parent-oriented. In addition, boys (17%) are slightly more teacher-oriented than girls (13%), and girls (16%) slightly more friend-oriented than boys (10%). Thus, judging from the adolescents' responses to a question asking whose opinions they respect more, it hardly seems appropriate to characterize vocational-school adolescents as basically peer-oriented. Rather, these results suggest that these adolescents show considerably more respect for their parents' opinions.

How do adolescents with different person-orientations differ in school achievement, personality, and attitudes toward parents and peers?

II. Person-Orientation and School Achievement

Teacher-oriented adolescents are expected logically to report more positive attitudes and behaviors toward school achievement. We expect similar attitudes and performances from parent-oriented students, since parents are generally supportive of education and approve of their children doing well in school. Friend-oriented adolescents, however, have been described as less concerned about achieving in school. Data related to these expectations are shown in Table 4-2.

On the index of time spent doing homework (Table 4-2a), about twice as many friend-oriented adolescents as teacher- or parent-oriented adolescents report spending no time on homework. This finding applies to both sexes, but fewer girls report doing no homework than boys.

Teacher- and parent-oriented adolescents significantly more often (Table 4-2b) place themselves in the top halves of their classes on school grades than do friend-oriented adolescents. On this item, too, girls more often report themselves as higher achievers than boys.

Friend-oriented adolescents less often report that they very much approve of students who are serious about becoming top students. On this variable, teacher-oriented and parent-oriented boys are about the same, whereas teacher-oriented girls report more approval than parent- and friend-oriented girls, who were as approving as the more approving boys (Table 4-2c).

The intention to continue education after completing high school is noticeably more often expressed by teacher- and parent-oriented boys and girls than by friend-oriented boys and girls (Table 4-2d), although the chi-square was significant for the boys only.

Table 4-2e shows that the fathers of parent-oriented boys are reported significantly more often as "getting after" their sons to do well in school. The mothers of teacher- and parant-oriented boys also significantly more

TABLE 4-2

Differences Among Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents on Items Related to School Achievement

	Teacher-Oriented		Parent-Oriented		Friend-Oriented	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	(242)	(116)	(1078)	(614)	(152)	(136)
(a) (Item:S113) Percent who spend no time per day on homework.	23***	12%***	25	10	46	24
(b) (Item:S135) Percent who place themselves in top half on school grades.	62%***	76%***	58	61	42	49
(c) (Item:S315) Percent who very much approve of serious students.	51%***	59%	48	50	29	47
(d) (Item:S458) Percent intending to continue education after high school.	33%*	31%	35	28	25	22
(e) (Item:S131-32) Percent whose parents get after them to do well in school. /Father:	30%***	20%**	40	28	27	17
/Mother:	46%*	30%	48	37	37	31
(f) (Item:S265-66) Percent whose parents get after them to go to college. /Father:	59%**	37%***	68	55	55	40
/Mother:	71%**	58%***	79	68	66	48

The probabilities of the chi-squares for the contingency tables (with person-orientation as independent variable): ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p<.05.

often expect them to do well in school. This difference is not as clear for the girls, but parent-oriented girls do report hearing more from their mothers about school achievement than do teacher-oriented or friend-oriented girls. Regardless of person-orientation, however, both fathers and mothers "get after" their sons more than their daughters about performing well in school.

Table 4-2f somewhat mirrors the results of Table 4-2e, except that here the variable is parental pressure to go to college and this pressure is more pervasive -- apparently, not all parents who want their children to go to college get after them to do well in school. At any rate, parent-oriented students more often receive pressure from their parents to go to college than do teacher- or friend-oriented students, although teacher-oriented students seem to hear more about college from parents than do friend-oriented students. As with urgings to do well in school, parental pressure to attend college is more often applied to sons than to daughters.

To summarize: parent-oriented adolescents and teacher-oriented adolescents work harder at achieving in school, feel more accomplished at and positive about achieving in school, and are expected by their parents to be better students by achieving in school than friend-oriented students. On the whole, these findings are equally true for parent-oriented and teacher-oriented students. Furthermore, these differences associated with person-orientation are usually more striking for boys than for girls.

III. Person-Orientation and Adolescent Personality

Differences among teacher-, parent-, and friend-oriented adolescents on five personality items are significant statistically but form no clear pattern. Why personality and other differences among the three groups of adolescents take the directions they do is not yet clear. For the present, we merely describe these differences.

Table 4-3a presents the percentages of students in each group who do not want to change themselves, being largely satisfied with the way they are. Parent-oriented and friend-oriented adolescents are significantly more often satisfied with themselves than are teacher-oriented adolescents. For each person-orientation type, boys report more satisfaction with themselves than do girls.

TABLE 4-3

Differences Among Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents on Items Related to Personality

	Teacher-Oriented		Parent-Oriented		Friend-Oriented	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	(242)	(116)	(1078)	(614)	(152)	(136)
(a) (Item:S328) Percent who are largely satisfied with the way they are.	33%*	22%*	42	31	40	27
(b) (Item:S330-32) Percent with high scores on control of environment scale.	60%***	63%***	62	70	43	53
(c) (Item:S333-34) Percent with high rebelliousness scores.	46%**	22%***	47	18	62	34
(d) (Item:S447) Percent in fights since entering this school.	62%*	26%	59	22	73	30
(e) (Item:S448) Percent who go along when friends stir up excitement.	30%***	8%***	29	10	43	26

The probabilities of the chi-squares for the contingency tables (with person-orientation as independent variable): ***p<.001, **p<.01, *p <.05.

Substantially more teacher- and parent-oriented students attain high scores on the "control of environment" scale[1] than do friend-oriented boys and girls (Table 4-3b). This scale indicates the individual's tendency either to acquiesce to environmental influences or to believe that he can manipulate the environment to satisfy his demands or needs. Adolescents who are friend-oriented more often believe that their environment is beyond their control than do parent- and teacher-otiented adolescents. Although causal inferences from this data are speculative, this feeling of lack of control over their environment may compel friend-oriented students to seek peer contact and companionship.

Rebelliousness[2] also predominates among the friend-oriented adolescents (Table 4-3c), being true for both boys and girls, although there is a marked sex difference in that twice as many boys as girls within all groups are high in rebellion. In his work with this variable, Stinchcombe (1964) found that rebellion was stimulated in adolescents who were involved in education programs unrelated to their future goals. Perhaps this relationship is what we find among friend-oriented adolescents; they more often express little or no control over the environment and, therefore, more often express rebellion against the environment and the persons in it (compare Tables 4-3b and 4-3c).

Consistent with these results, Table 4-3d shows that fighting occurs more often among friend-oriented adolescents than among teacher- or parent-oriented boys. A similar pattern exists for the girls, but considerably fewer girls report being in fights than do boys. This greater penchant for fighting among friend-oriented adolescents reflects their significantly greater belief in the propriety of fighting, information derived from a separate item (data not shown). Friend-oriented girls are more convinced that fighting is not wrong than parent- and teacher-oriented girls.

---

[1] This scale is composed of the same three items Coleman (1966) used to construct his control of environment scale reported in Equality of Educational Opportunity:

330. Every time I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me. (check one.)
1 --- agree 2 --- not sure 3 --- disagree

331. People like me don't have much of a chance to be successful in life.
1 --- agree 2 --- not sure 3 --- disagree

332. Good luck is more important than hard work for success.
1 --- agree 2 --- not sure 3 --- disagree

[2] The rebelliousness scale was made up of two slightly altered items from Stinchcombe's (1964) measure of rebellion:

333. Have you ever skipped school with a friend or friends? (check one.)
1 --- never 2 --- once in a while 3 --- several times
4 --- fairly often

334. Have you ever been sent out of a class for misbehavior or gotten detention? (check one.)
1 --- never 2 --- once in a while 3 --- several times
4 --- fairly often

Friend-oriented students more often say they go along with their friends who stir up excitement than do parent- and teacher-oriented students. This is differentially true for boys and girls; boys much more often go along with friends who stir up excitement than do girls. This item indicates the extent to which adolescents follow their friends' leads and implies following them in dangerous or improper behaviors. The three groups do not differ on an item that gets at going along with friends on a decision about which they disagree with their friends (data not shown).

To recapitulate: friend-oriented adolescents are different on personality items than similar teacher- and parent-oriented adolescents. The exception to this trend is that teacher-oriented adolescents are less often satisfied with themselves than are parent- and friend-oriented adolescents. On the four remaining personality items, friend-oriented adolescents less often believe that they can control their environment, report more rebelliousness, more often report getting into fights and believe in fighting, and more often go along with their friends when they stir up excitement than do parent- and teacher-oriented adolescents.

IV. Person-Orientation and Attitudes Toward Parents and Peers

We have seen that person-orientation among adolescents is related to school achievement and personality. In this section, we shall examine the relationships between person-orientation and the adolescent's perceptions of and attitudes toward his parents and his peers. In one sense, this section repeats the construct validation of the person-orientation concept that was reported in Chapter II, by showing that friend-oriented adolescents react more positively to their peers and that parent-oriented adolescents react more positively to the parents. However, the items discussed here go beyond comparisons of the relative influences of teachers, parents, and peers used to demonstrate validity of the person-orientation groups. The differences among adolescents on the items of this section touch on the values that enter into the daily interactions between adolescents and their parents and peers.

Five parallel items about relationships with mothers and fathers were combined to form separate parent-socialization influence scales.[3] Table 4-4a presents the percentages of teacher-, parent-, and friend-oriented adolescents who received high scores on these scales. The socialization influence of fathers and mothers is weakest for the friend-oriented boys, stronger for teacher-oriented boys, and strongest for parent-oriented boys. The patterns are similar for the girls except that teacher-oriented girls show as weak father-socialization influence as friend-oriented girls, and girls are less influenced by their fathers as socializing agents than boys. Boys, however, are no less influenced by their mothers than are girls.

---

[3] These items were S424-428 for the mother's socialization value scale and S432-436 for the father's socialization value scale. Kandel, et al. (1967, p. 8-26 ff.) provide a statistical basis for combining the five items into a scale of parental socialization value.

TABLE 4-4

Differences Among Teacher-, Parent-, and Friend-Oriented Adolescents on Items Related to Their Parents and Peers

	Teacher-Oriented		Parent-Oriented		Friend-Oriented	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
	(242)	(116)	(1078)	(614)	(152)	(136)
(a) (From 5-item scale) Percent high on parent socialization influence scale. /Father:	65%***	37%***	83	63	51	33
/Mother:	65%***	65%***	84	89	48	44
(b) (Item:S368) Percent who feel that parents do not give enough freedom.	19%**	30%***	13	13	24	31
(c) (Item:S419) Percent who feel parents a good deal old-fashioned.	35%***	34%***	21	18	39	44
(d) (Item:S410-18) Percent whose parents have none of the listed rules for them.	28%*	14%	22	12	34	15
(e) (Item:S342) Percent who would openly see friends their parents objected to.	53%***	50%***	43	33	74	65
(f) (Item:S376) Percent who prefer friends' to parents' company.	56%***	61%***	39	35	78	84
(g) (Item:S340) Percent who say there is a leading crowd.	49%**	51%	51	51	64	56
(h) (Item:S336) Percent who say it's very important to dress like their friends.	24%*	28%	25	26	34	31

The probabilities of the chi-squares for the contingency tables (with person-orientation as independent variable): ***$p<.001$, **$p<.01$, *$p<.05$.

The difference in parent socialization scores between parent-oriented and friend-oriented adolescents is extremely large but expected. Somewhat puzzling, though, is the finding that teacher-oriented adolescents fall between parent- and friend-oriented adolescents on parent socialization value. Like friend-oriented adolescents, they are not oriented toward their parents; like parent-oriented adolescents, however, they lean toward adults' and not peers' opinions. This middle position seems characteristic of the teacher-oriented adolescents on the other items dealing with attitudes of adolescents toward their parents.

Table 4-4b contains the percentages of adolescents who feel that their parents do not give them enough freedom. Friend-oriented adolescents most often feel hampered by their parents, and parent-oriented adolescents least often feel this way. Girls tend to feel that they have less freedom than boys.

Both teacher- and friend-oriented adolescents more often assess their parents to be a good deal old-fashioned than do parent-oriented adolescents (Table 4-4c).

Girls do not differ appreciably by person-orientation group on having no parental rules for them to follow[4] (Table 4-4d). Boys, however, do differ significantly on this variable. Apparently, the parents of friend- and teacher-oriented boys more often have no rules for their sons, with the parent-oriented boys least often having parents who have no rules for them. The expected sex difference that parents more often have rules for girls than for boys is observed in Table 4-4d.

Surprisingly large percentages of boys and girls across the three categories of adolescents say they would openly continue to see friends their parents objected to. As seen in Table 4-4e, though, the friend-oriented adolescents most often say they would openly defy their parents' objections, while the parent-oriented adolescents least often defy their parents' wishes. According to the percentage differences between sexes, girls are less often defiant of their parents than boys, but they reflect the same pattern by person-orientation group as the boys. Although there have been sex differences on items in expected directions throughout the analyses, the response patterns have been remarkably similar for both sexes, suggesting that person-orientation reflects itself in the adolescent behaviors of both sexes.

---

[4] The list of rules used in this analysis is taken from items S410-418.

Table 4-4f shows that many more friend-oriented adolescents than parent-oriented adolescents prefer their friends' to their parents' company. Once again, teacher-oriented adolescents fall between the two extreme groups on this item.

Friend-oriented boys are significantly more often convinced that there is such a thing as a leading crowd in their schools. No great difference is noted among the girls, but the friend-oriented girls slightly more often believe there is a leading crowd (Table 4-4g).

Dressing like one's friends is more often very important for friend-oriented adolescents (Table 4-4h).

Summarizing the results of this section on the relationships between person-orientation among adolescents and their attitudes and values regarding their parents and peers: (1) perhaps not unexpectedly, and in keeping with the stereotype, friend-oriented adolescents generally demonstrate anti-parent attitudes and values, while parent-oriented adolescents consistently support their orientation by more often choosing positive responses toward their parents; (2) parents reportedly impose fewer restrictions and rules on friend-oriented adolescents, and are more often defied openly by them, especially regarding behavior with their friends; these same friend-oriented adolescents are more rebellious than other adolescents, (3) the teacher-oriented adolescents generally fall between the other two groups in their attitudes.

Summary

The purpose of this section is to study the prevalence of peer-orientation among adolescents and to examine some of the stereotypes associated with it. A person-orientation concept employing three groups of persons (teachers, parents, and friends) was used to study peer-orientation in relation to (a) school achievement, (b) adolescent personality, and (c) attitudes toward parents and peers.

First, we find that most adolescents appear to be adult-oriented, since about 90% of them prefer their parents' (73% boys; 71% girls) or their teachers' (17% boys, 13% girls) opinions to their friends' (10% boys; 16% girls) opinions. Thus, the stereotype that assigns the majority of adolescents to being peer-oriented does not apply to our sample of vocational-school adolescents.

Second, person-orientation is related to how well adolescents do in school, certain aspects of their personalities, and their attitudes toward their parents and peers. In these areas, the stereotype of peer-oriented adolescents is upheld; they are more anti-adult than other adolescents, report that they do not achieve as well in school, feel less in control of their environments, and are more rebellious. Parent-oriented adolescents feel more in control of their environments, are less rebellious, get along better with their parents, and report that they do better in school. Teacher-oriented adolescents are similar to parent-oriented adolescents in school achievement and personality, but express more alienated views of their parents than do parent-oriented adolescents, a finding that is not surprising, since these students perhaps turn to their teachers because of some negative reaction to their parents.

What is not clear at this point is why adolescents choose to identify with different groups of persons and not with others. Evidence exists that suggests that *SES* and sex are not associated with adolescent peer or adult reference-group orientation (Purnell, in press). Present analyses show that person-orientation is not associated with father's or mother's educational level. Nor have we found it to be related to broken homes (data not shown). If it can be shown that rebellion (or "expressive alienation") underlies much of the peer-oriented adolescents' negative behavior, it may be reasonable to accept some variation on Stinchcombe's (1964) "articulation of status" explanation to account for peer-orientation. In his study, Stinchcombe found that high school youth in school programs that were not conducive to achieving (articulating) their aspired statuses were more rebellious and alienated at school. Our data reveal high-school students who are peer-oriented show greater rebellion and alienation from parents. Rather than, or in addition to, impedance of articulation by the school, these adolescents are seen as alienating themselves from parents because their relationships with them impede articulation of desired statuses. Persons other than parents, e.g., teachers and friends, then become their reference groups, although it is not clear what determines this choice.

V. Parental Views and Aspirations

This last section describes how the vocational students' parents feel about vocational education for their children, and what they say about some of the issues that were responded to by the students whom we have found to be predominantly parent-oriented. Initial evidence of a greater parent-orientation among these students appeared earlier in Chapter 3 (Tables 3-1, 3-2), where results showed that parents had exerted considerable influence on students in choice of vocation. An important observation is the extent to which parents and students agree on those items they both answered. Although these analyses do not study influence directly, some insights into parent-student agreement may be achieved. Perhaps the most enlightening information is that which deals with the parents' views of and attitudes toward vocational education. It also will be informative to learn the parents' educational and other aspirations for vocational students.

We asked how parents felt about their children going to a vocational high school instead of a regular high school, both at the time the child decided to go to a vocational school and at the time the questionnaire was administered. Tables 4-5 and 4-6 show the students' perceptions of their parents' feelings and the parents' self-reported attitudes, respectively.

Two-thirds of the boys and girls (Table 4-5a) report that their parents were initially very much in favor of vocational high school for their children. Only 9% of the students remember their parents as being opposed to their decision to go to a vocational school. The remainder of the students (25%) claim that their parents somewhat favored or did not care about their child's entering a vocational school.

Even from this base of relatively favorable opinion, the picture improves with time. Students report (Table 4-5b) that their parents' attitudes toward a vocational education for their children became more favorable after they had attended their schools for some time. After having their children in vocational school, three-quarters of the parents impressed the students as having very favorable outlooks on vocational education. Fewer parents 5% boys; 3% girls) seem to the students to be against it at this later period.

The same phenomenon that emerged from the students' perceptions of how parents felt about vocational education emerges in what parents report about themselves (see Table 4-6). About 80% of the parents report that, when their children decided to enter a vocational school instead of a regular high school, they were very much in favor of the idea. After their children have been in the school, about 88% of the parents say they are very much in favor of vocational education.

The slight discrepancy between what the parents report and what the students report about their parents might be due to the fact that about 30% of the students' parents failed to return their questionnaires. These might have been the parents who opposed vocational schools for their children, or at least the ones who so impressed their children. One concrete bit of information about parent-student agreement on the question of parents' attitudes toward vocational school can be reported. When parents who answered their questionnaires were matched with their children, 83% agreement[5] on how parents felt about vocational school was found between them. This finding suggests that the students whose parents answered the questionnaire were exceptionally accurate in reporting their parents' views.

---

[5] This was found by cumulating those instances in which matched pairs of parent and child said the parent favored vocational education, the parent did not care, and the parent was against vocational education.

TABLE 4-5

Initial and Current Parental Feelings Concerning Vocational High School Attendance of Their Children as Reported by the Students

(a) (Item:S133)

Degree of initial favorableness toward vocational high school of parent reported by student.	Boys (1981)	Girls (1079)
Very much in favor	67%	66%
Somewhat in favor	15	14
Didn't care	10	11
Somewhat against	7	7
Very much against	2	2

(b) (Item:S134)

Degree of current favorableness toward vocational high school of parent reported by student.	Boys	Girls
Very much in favor	75%	75%
Somewhat in favor	16	14
Didn't care	5	7
Somewhat against	4	2
Very much against	1	1

TABLE 4-6

Initial and Current Parental Feelings Regarding Their Child's Attendance of Vocational Instead of Regular High School as Reported by Parents

(a) (Item:P126)

Degree of initial favorableness reported by parents.	Boys' Parents (1198)	Girls' Parents (597)
Very much in favor	81%	78%
Somewhat in favor	12	13
Didn't care	1	4
Somewhat against	5	4
Very much against	0	1

(b) (Item:P127)

Degree of current favorableness reported by parents.	Boys' Parents	Girls' Parents
Very much in favor	88%	88%
Somewhat in favor	9	8
Didn't care	0	2
Somewhat against	2	1
Very much against	1	1

Few parents of vocational students in this sample attended vocational high schools themselves (Table 4-7a). Thus, parental attendance of vocational schools is not responsible for the widespread positive attitudes by parents toward vocational schools, attitudes perceived for the most part by their children.

Mothers were asked whether they felt students would be better off in vocational programs in regular high schools or those in vocational high schools. This question differs from the previous question on parental attitudes toward vocational high schools in that it focuses on the program or trade preparation of the two types of schools. About 22% of the mothers (Table 4-7b) think trade preparation in regular high schools is better than in vocational high schools. This means that, although 96% of the mothers state that they favor having their children in vocational schools (Table 4-6b), only 78% of them think the vocational school program is superior to a vocational program in a regular school. Apparently, the mothers (18%) who seem to have contradicted themselves feel that there is something more important than trade preparation for their children in vocational schools. Or, conversely, this 18% of the mothers may want to have their children avoid some aspect of regular high schools. It is interesting to note that the students more often (Table 3-5) feel attracted to the regular high school program than do their parents.

Related to how mothers feel about the superiority of vocational schools and their programs is their satisfaction with the training their children receive. As many as 94% of the boys' and 97% of the girls' mothers say that they are satisfied or very satisfied (Table 4-7c), corresponding with the almost unanimous favorableness expressed by mothers about vocational versus regular high school attendance for their children (Table 4-6b).

Virtually all the mothers say they want their children to finish high school (data not shown). This basic expectation precedes the loftier aspirations held by mothers for their children upon leaving high school found in Table 4-8a. The majority of mothers of both sexes prefer that their children continue their education after graduating high school (65% boys; 55% girls). Most of the remaining mothers say they want their daughters to get a job (40%). Very few mothers want their sons to enter military service (7%). On this mothers and sons disagree (7% mothers; 32% sons). They also disagree on getting a job (10% mothers; 25% sons) and on entering apprenticeship (19% mothers; 8% sons) immediately after high school. Perhaps it would be more meaningful to indicate how often mothers and sons do agree. On the five categories outlined in Table 4-8a, sons are in perfect agreement with their (matched) mothers 33% of the time, while 45% of the daughters agree perfectly with what their (matched) mothers have in mind for them to do. The surprising finding here is that so many mothers of vocational students express expectations that their children will continue their education.

TABLE 4-7

Parental Experiences with and Opinions of Vocational School Education

(a) (Items :P152-53)

Parents with vocational high school training.	Boys' Parents (1198)	Girls' Parents (597)
Mothers	7%	11%
Fathers	9	10

(b) (Item:P155)

Mother's feelings about regular high school vocational program being bettern than separate vocational high school program.	Boys' Mothers	Girls' Mothers
Strongly agree	7%	6%
Agree	15	18
Disagree	60	61
Strongly disagree	18	15

(c) (Item:P241)

Mother's satisfaction with training at child's school.	Boys' Mothers	Girls' Mothers
Very satisfied	45%	48%
Satisfied	49	48
Dissatisfied	6	3
Very Dissatisfied	0	0

TABLE 4-8

Mothers' Post-High School Aspirations for Their Children

(a) (Item:P237)

Mother's preference for child after graduating.	Boys' Mothers (1198)	Girls' Mothers (597)
Get a job	10%	40%
Military service	7	0
Apprenticeship	19	4
Continue education	65	55
Other	0	1

(b) (Item:P238)

Mother's aspiration for child's education.	Boys' Mothers	Girls' Mothers
Technical institute	43%	19%
2-year college	9	19
4-year college	35	35
Graduate school	9	14
Does not want child to go on	4	13

Moreover, by comparing what the students say about continuing their education (Table 3-8b) with what their mothers hope they will do (Table 4-8a), it becomes obvious that the mothers' expectations far outstrip their children's plans. The percentage of mothers who want their sons and daughters to continue their education after high school (62%) is twice the percentage of children who say they plan to continue (30%).

Further comparisons of the mothers' educational aspirations for their children and the students' own educational plans are supplied by the information located in Table 3-8c for the students and in Table 4-8b for the mothers. First, 38% of the boys and 55% of the girls explicitly state they do not plan to continue their education; in striking contrast, only 4% of the boys' mothers and 13% of the girls' mothers report having no desire for their children to seek more education beyond high school. However, the American dream for a four-year college education is expressed just as often by mothers for daughters (35%) as for sons (35%). It should also be noted that mothers deem technical schools less appropriate for daughters (19%) than for sons (43%). Conversely, two-year colleges are considered less desirable for boys (9%) than for girls (19%) by mothers.

Also of interest in Tables 3-8c and 4-8b is the fact that twice as many mothers want their sons and daughters to go to technical schools and four-year colleges (78% boys; 54% girls) than the vocational students mention they want to go to these institutions. This mother-child disagreement is supported by the results of a cross-tabulation of mothers' and students' responses to the question asking about educational plans. About 20% of the mothers and sons directly agree with each other, whereas 14% of the girls are in agreement with their mothers on this topic. However, interpretations of the disagreement between mothers and their children suggested by these agreement figures should be made cautiously: by our criteria, a son planning to go to a four-year college is not in "agreement" with a mother who wants him to go to a two-year college. The important thing, though, is that both have aspirations for a higher education.

Initially, it seemed surprising to find so many vocational students (55% boys; 37% girls) aspiring to pursue their education beyond high school. But given the commonplace expectations for a higher education among the mothers (for sons 87%; for daughters 73%), the number of vocational students expressing a desire to continue their education might more appropriately be considered disappointingly low. Neither students nor their parents perceive vocational high school as terminal education.

To sum up this final section on the parents' views, (1) students report improvements in parents' attitudes toward vocational high schools during the adolescents' attendance there, (2) in the same vein, the parents' responses yield the same type of improvement, but more of them claim to have favored vocational education for their children from the start, (3) very few parents report having received a vocational school education; thus, parental favorableness toward vocational high school is not a product of their own experiences in vocational schools, (4) in most cases, a mother's professed favor for vocational school is clearly supported by her satisfaction with the training her child receives in the school, (5) however, some of the mothers (22%) say that they prefer the vocational programs of regular high schools to those of vocational high schools, (6) all mothers want their children to finish high school, and very few mothers (4% boys; 13% girls) admit to not wanting their children to continue their education after high school. Inasmuch as these are mothers of specialized vocational high school students, it is somewhat surprising to encounter such widespread expectations for higher education for their children among them.

CHAPTER 5

Stereotypes Concerning the Value of Education for Work-Bound and College-Bound Youth

The stereotype investigated in this chapter concerns the comparative value placed on the educational and related experiences of vocational and regular high-school students: education in a comprehensive high school is believed by many to be "superior" to a specialized vocational high-school education. This is the global form of the stereotype. Stated more precisely, the belief is that the education provided for work-bound youth in a comprehensive high school is superior to education for work-bound youth in a vocational high school. This belief has important consequences for the continuation of specialized vocational high schools in America (e.g., Meade & Feldman, 1966). Before stating our approach to stydying this stereotype, we shall attempt to clarify its parts, show how they are related, and present reasons for questioning the stereotype.

Two main parts of the stereotype are (a) Conant's (1959, 1967) arguments favoring comprehensive high schools for work-bound youth and (b) the widespread belief that preparation for college is the "best" high-school education. Conant's arguments surely have bolstered the stereotype that specialized vocational high schools provide less desirable educational settings and experiences for work-bound students. His position rests mainly on the assumption that the community is served best by placing diverse educational programs under one educational roof; future holders of different statuses and occupations supposedly benefit from the opportunity to interact and get to understand one another. We have learned from interviews during questionnaire pretesting with about fifty vocational and regular high-school students, however, that among students in the various comprehensive high-school programs barriers favoring the academic students are set up and solidified. Further, vocational students said they sought separate vocational high schools in an effort to escape the stigmas and ordeals encountered in comprehensive high-school systems, stigmas they described as interfering with achieving the vocational education they wanted. The popular belief that separate vocational high schools are undesirable for work-bound students may have some basis in reality in the "dumping-ground" conditions of some vocational schools in huge urban areas. Its heaviest support, however, almost certainly comes from the widespread preference in American society for a college education, fostering in turn a concomitant distaste for "lower" educational programs.

In essence, the stereotype reduces to the belief among the American public that work-bound students in comprehensive high schools are somehow better off than work-bound students in vocational high schools. To some extent, we already have addressed that belief indirectly: in Chapter 3, we showed that the great majority of vocational students in our sample prefer vocational programs in separate vocational high schools to vocational programs in regular high schools. Our approach to examining the stereotype in this chapter is broader and more direct, somewhat repeating the themes used to describe vocational students in Chapter 3. Here we compare the responses of vocational, academic, commercial, and general students regarding: (a) who goes into the different high-school tracks? (b) what is high school like for students in the different high-school programs? and (c) where do students in the different programs expect to go after high school? We hope to provide a more accurate view of what it means to be a work-bound youth either in a regular or a vocational high school, comparing work-bound youth in each of the two conditions with college-bound youth.

The final section of this chapter examines the influence of the family on students in different programs. Earlier chapters have shown the family to be a very influential force among vocational students. Our intention here is to learn the relative importance of that degree of influence by comparing it with the influence exerted by the families of other types of students.

Originally, we intended to compare regular high-school students[1], collectively, with specialized vocational high-school students. However, the results of comparisons among the three major groups of comprehensive high-school students (i.e., academic, commercial, and general students)[2] rendered treating them as one group meaningless for our purposes. Thus, our comparative analyses involve four groups of students: one group of specialized vocational high-school students and three groups of comprehensive high-school students. In addition to permitting comparisons between vocational and "academic" students, this arrangement allows us to make comparisons among the three major student tracks of the comprehensive high school. The lack of such comparisons in other studies of high-school youth, we feel, restricts the meaning of their findings.

---

[1] The three regular high schools from the Kandel, et al., (1968) study were used in making these comparisons. Approximately 20% (N=326) of the students at the largest (#32) of these three schools were Negroes and were not used in these comparisons. They were distributed quite differently among the three programs (e.g., 38% of the whites but only 16% of the Negroes were in the academic program) and differed from the whites on many of the items.

I. Ascribed Status Differences Among Students

This section investigates the extent to which students in the four high-school programs differ on items that allude to their ascriptive statuses. The larger question of interest here is what factors decide who goes into the various programs? The items used in this section mostly reflect the social-class affiliations of the students: father's occupation, father's and mother's education, number of siblings, years in a community, number of intact homes, and number of working mothers. Differences in the percentage of students from the different social levels in the four programs do not directly test the stereotype of superior education for work-bound students in comprehensive high schools. Rather, such differences demonstrate that ascriptive statuses, for whatever underlying reasons, tend to perpetuate across generations, a condition that is antithetical to an important reason for having comprehensive high schools. In a democracy, the schools are expected to serve the ideal of dissolving social-class barriers and shackles. These results also enable us to examine the claim that vocational high schools are the dumping grounds for students from the lower social classes.

Table 5-1 shows that father's occupation is significantly related to the type of program that comprehensive and vocational high-school students enter. More boys and girls in the academic programs come from homes with fathers in clerical and sales,

---

[2] There were not enough "vocational" students in the three comprehensive high schools to include them as a separate group in our study. In a preliminary survey, twenty "comprehensive" high schools (including the three alluded to above) that came to the attention of the investigators had only an average of 5% of their boys and 2% of their girls in vocational programs.

TABLE 5-1

Distribution of Father's Occupation as Reported by Students

(Item:S363-64)

Father's Occupation	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
Unemployed	$2\%^a$	$2\%^a$	0***	1***	1	0	0	1
Farmer	1	0	2	1	2	1	2	3
Unskilled and Semi-skilled	37	37	28	22	38	36	34	22
Skilled	37	36	29	33	35	44	44	53
Clerical-Sales	6	7	11	7	8	5	5	5
Managerial	13	12	17	20	14	8	10	10
Professional	5	6	13	16	4	5	4	7
N Respondents	(1822)	(949)	(344)	(222)	(159)	(547)	(270)	(60)

a,*** $p < .001$; b,**$p < .01$; c,*$p < .05$.

In the tables of this chapter, a,b, and c indicate levels of significance among the percentages for the vocational, academic, commercial, and general students; asterisks denote levels of significance among the percentages for the academic, commercial, and general students.

professional and managerial fields; more commercial and general students have fathers in unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled occupational categories. The distribution of father's occupations among vocational students closely resembles those of the two work-bound student programs in comprehensive high schools.

As expected, the distributions of father's and mother's education by student programs (shown in Tables 5-2 and 5-3, respectively) reflect the same patterns found for father's occupation in Table 5-1. More work-bound students have parents with less education than college-bound students. Once again, the distributions are significantly different among the programs of the comprehensive high-school students.

Table 5-4 contains students' responses to four demographic variables: number of siblings in their families, years in the community, intact homes, and work status of mothers. Fewer academic students have three or more siblings in their families, while more vocational students have three or more siblings (Table 5-4a). Among the boys, there is no appreciable difference in percent whose families have lived in their communities for ten or more years. Girls in commercial and general programs, however, tend to come from families who have lived in the communities for longer periods. More boys and girls in vocational schools and more general-program girls come from broken homes. Only girls in general programs have a markedly higher percentage of mothers working out of the home.

In summary, social-class differences exist between college-bound youth and work-bound students in both comprehensive and vocational high schools. The work-bound students in both types of high school have similar social-class distributions, as indicated by father's occupation and parents' education. More college-bound youth have parents with white-collar jobs and more years of education, while more work-bound youths' fathers hold blue-collar jobs and have less education. If students are channeled into vocational high schools by social class, they are similarly channeled into work-bound programs in comprehensive high schools.

II Student Experiences in the Various Programs

Here, we touch on variables that more closely test the validity of the stereotype under study: are the educational and other experiences in the comprehensive high-school programs "superior" to those in vocational high schools for work-bound students, as perceived by

TABLE 5-2

Distribution of Father's Education as Reported by Students

(Item:S369)

Father's Education	Vocational Boys	Vocational Girls	Academic Boys	Academic Girls	Commercial Boys	Commercial Girls	General Boys	General Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
Grade school or less	31%[a]	32%[a]	26***	18***	35	43	44	35
Some high school	32	37	31	25	35	37	30	29
Finished high school	28	23	24	25	24	15	19	28
Some college	5	4	8	10	2	3	4	7
Finished college or more	4	4	11	21	3	2	4	2
N Respondents	(1755)	(993)	(345)	(229)	(136)	(512)	(223)	(58)

a,***$p<.001$; b,**$p<.01$; c,*$p<.05$.

TABLE 5-3

Distribution of Mother's Education as Reported by Students

(Item:S370)

Mother's Education	Vocational Boys	Vocational Girls	Academic Boys	Academic Girls	Commercial Boys	Commercial Girls	General Boys	General Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
Grade school or less	22% [a]	24% [a]	20***	15***	35	30	26	26
Some high school	29	42	29	30	32	43	32	26
Finished high school	40	29	34	28	30	22	35	37
Some college	5	3	6	9	1	3	3	3
Finished college or more	3	3	12	18	2	3	4	8
N Respondents	(1809)	(1028)	(354)	(235)	(148)	(535)	(240)	(62)

a,***$p<.001$; b,**$p<.01$; c,*$p<.05$.

TABLE 5-4

Distributions on Several Background Variables as Reported by Students

Item	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) (Item:S354-55) Percent with three or more siblings.	62%[a] (1886)	66%[a] (1057)	50 (357)	52 (235)	53 (157)	55 (562)	57 (249)	63 (65)
(b) (Item:S357) Percent with ten or more years in the community.	64% (1886)	56%[a] (1036)	70 (336)	59 (236)	67 (129)	68 (483)	69 (211)	66 (64)
(c) (Item:S353) Percent from broken homes.	27%[a] (1854)	34%[a] (1041)	22 (358)	17* (231)	15 (157)	22 (554)	18 (248)	30 (64)
(d) (Item:S365) Percent whose mothers are employed out of home.	45% (1854)	44%[c] (1041)	46 (366)	49*** (239)	44 (168)	42 (585)	47 (263)	60 (67)

a,***$p<.001$; b,**$p<.01$; c,*$p<.05$.

the students? In addition, we also compare intra-comprehensive high school experiences. Many different sets of variables can be used to examine the stereotype about high school experiences. We report on three areas of high-school experiences, as perceived by the students, that seem to represent the stereotype expressly. The three subsections deal with (a) school achievement and school satisfaction, (b) involvement in school activities, and (c) behaviors outside of school.

A. School achievement and satisfaction with school

One way of assessing the superiority of a school or a program within a school is to ascertain its students' relative appreciation for doing well or achieving in school and their satisfaction with school and school work.

The percentages of students in the four programs preferring to be remembered as brilliant students (as opposed to athletic stars or leaders and most popular) are reported in Table 5-5a. More vocational (35%) and academic (36%) boys prefer this image, while fewer commercial (25%) and general (25%) boys prefer it. More vocational girls (40%) prefer the brilliant-student image, while fewer general girls (24%) select it. Academic (35%) and commercial (36%) girls also choose this preferred image significantly more often than general girls.

In view of the stereotype of superior educational experiences for work-bound students in comprehensive high schools, it is surprising to find (Table 5-5a) as many vocational boys as academic boys and more vocational girls than academic girls preferring to be remembered as brilliant students. These results suggest, contrary to the stereotype, that work-bound vocational students are more like academic students than the work-bound comprehensive students who have direct contact with academic students.

Table 5-5b shows that good grades are most often very important to vocational (boys 40%; girls 46%) students, next most often very important to commercial students (boys 35%; girls 39%), and least often very important to general students (boys 29%; girls 23%). The importance of good grades for popularity among peers, however, is greatest for the academic students (Table 5-5c) work-bound youth placing somewhat less weight on grades as a criterion for popularity.

"Studying hard" is found "very satisfying" by only a minority of students in all programs (Table 5-5d). Among the boys, more vocational (18%) and academic (19%) students find studying hard

TABLE 5-5

Students' Responses to Items About School Achievement and Satisfaction with School

Item	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) (Item:S271) Percent preferring brilliant student image	35%[a] (1900)	40%[c] (1041)	36** (378)	35** (241)	25 (175)	36 (612)	25 (325)	24 (71)
(b) (Item:S268) Percent for whom good grades are very important.	43%[a] (1968)	47%[a] (1075)	40** (377)	46** (243)	35 (175)	39 (613)	29 (298)	23 (69)
(c) (Item:S462) Percent for whom good grades are important for being popular.	31%[c] (1500)	37%[a] (890)	39** (378)	42*** (243)	29 (175)	29 (622)	30 (334)	28 (72)
(d) (Item:S146) Percent for whom studying hard is very satisfying.	18%[b] (1961)	21%[a] (1069)	19** (377)	31** (243)	13 (174)	20 (609)	11 (294)	13 (69)
(e) (Item:S163) Percent who say it is very important for a teenager to work hard on studies.	41%[a] (1966)	49%[a] (1076)	50*** (368)	64** (239)	45 (167)	55 (585)	34 (267)	36 (66)
(f) (Item:S113) Percent who say they spend two or more hours a day on homework.	19%[a] (1960)	35%[a] (1068)	26*** (378)	52*** (242)	9 (175)	12 (621)	5 (334)	17 (72)

a,***$p<.001$; b,**$p<.01$; c,*$p<.05$

very satisfying; fewer commercial (13%) and general (11%) boys like to study hard. Among the girls, the academic students (31%) like studying hard much more than commercial (20%), vocational (21%) and general (13%) students. The importance of working hard on studies for teenagers in general (Table 5-5e) is most often endorsed by academic students (boys 50%; girls 64%), next by commercial (boys 45%; girls 55%) and vocational (boys 41%; girls 49%), and least often by general students (boys 34%; girls 36%).

Table 5-5f shows the percentages of students who report spending two or more hours a day doing homework. As with all the other variables presented thus far in Table 5-5, academic students differ significantly from the commercial and general students. As with many of the other variables, the vocational students more closely resemble the academic students. In this case, academic students (boys 26%; girls 52%) most often spend more time on homework. They are followed by the vocational students (boys 19%; girls 35%). Commercial (boys 9%; girls 12%) and general students (boys 5%; girls 17%) spend the least amount of time on homework.

In review, this subsection comparing students on indices of their school achievement and satisfaction with school suggests that vocational students in specialized vocational schools and academic students in comprehensive high schools believe that they achieve more in school and are more satisfied with their schooling than commercial and general students in comprehensive high schools. Commercial students usually place third on achievement in and satisfaction with school, while general students are always last on these two counts. General students, usually accompanied by commercial students are significantly less achievement-oriented in school than academic students. Vocational students have many of the same achievement values and behaviors and satisfaction with school as the academic students. In terms of achievement and satisfaction, the two work-bound groups are quite different. We conclude from these results that the vocational students in separate high schools more often view their experiences as educationally valuable than do commercial and general students in comprehensive high schools. The stereotype that comprehensive schools provide superior educational experiences to those of vocational schools, as indicated by achievement orientation and satisfaction with school, must be modified: academic students in a comprehensive school (and vocational students in a separate school) more often view their experiences positively than do commercial and general students in comprehensive schools.

B. Involvement in school activities

In addition to being satisfied with school and interested in doing well at school, high-school students give considerable attention to sports and extracurricular activities. The extent to which students report themselves participating in these school activities and the importance they place on them may be used to examine another facet of the claim that comprehensive high schools offer superior experiences and opportunities to their students.

Table 5-6a shows that academic students (boys 42%; girls 56%) far exceed other students in percent involved in two or more extracurricular activities. Vocational students closely resemble commercial and general students in their involvement in two or more extracurricular activities. However, lower participation in extracurricular activities among vocational students probably occurs for different reasons than lower participation among non-academic comprehensive students, since vocational students do not have to contend with academic students filling the ranks of the extracurricular activities. For example, vocational students may have less time or desire for extracurricular activities, (being more engrossed in their trade or occupational preparations) or fewer extracurricular opportunities.

Consistent with the above findings, more vocational and academic students say that it is very important to engage in extracurricular activities than commercial and general students (Table 5- 6b). Vocational students (who perhaps do not have time to indulge in extracurricular activities) more readily agree and recognize that it is important for other adolescents. Academic students, who are most involved in extracurricular activities, also more often see it as important. Commercial and general students, who probably have less access to extracurricular activities, less frequently see it as important.

Table 5-6c demonstrates that the students who most frequently participate in extracurricular activities most often employ it as a measure of popularity among themselves. We already have seen that this group is the academic students.

A somewhat similar pattern to that found among students in extracurricular activities occurs in their participation in sports at school (Table 5-6d): all comprehensive students are more often involved in two or more sports than vocational students, but among comprehensive students the academic boys are significantly more often active in school sports.

Academic boys (69%) and girls (28%) more often say that being athletic and interested in sports is used by them as an important criterion for popularity. Among the boys, the vocational students

TABLE 5-6

Students' Responses to Items About Involvement in School Activities

	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
Item	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) (Item: S228-39) Percent who report being in two or more extracurricular activities.	13%[a] (1962)	27%[a] (1074)	42*** (377)	56*** (243)	14 (175)	21 (621)	13 (332)	21 (72)
(b) (Item:S160) Percent who say it is very important to be a leader in extra-curricular activities.	31%[a] (1966)	40%[a] (1076)	31*** (368)	26*** (240)	17 (167)	14 (589)	15 (267)	9 (67)
(c) (Item:S465) Percent who say participation in extracurricular activities is important for being popular.	23%[a] (1500)	27%[a] (890)	43*** (378)	37*** (243)	19 (175)	18 (622)	25 (334)	19 (72)
(d) (Item:S217-27) Percent who report being in two or more sports at school.	24%[a] (1962)	16%[a] (1074)	54*** (376)	33 (239)	37 (174)	26 (618)	31 (334)	31 (72)

(Table continued).

TABLE 5-6

(Continued)

Item	Vocational Boys	Vocational Girls	Academic Boys	Academic Girls	Commercial Boys	Commercial Girls	General Boys	General Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(e) (Item:S467) Percent who say being athletic and interested in sports important for being popular.	41%a (1500)	22%[a] (190)	69*** (378)	28*** (243)	50 (175)	16 (622)	49 (333)	22 (72)
(f) (Item:S339) Percent who report no leading groups in school.	33% (1901)	30% (1014)	27 (372)	25* (240)	33 (174)	30 (605)	33 (325)	21 (71)
(g) (Item:S341) Percent who say they are members of the leading crowd.	23%[a] (1901)	18%[a] (1016)	50** (377)	45*** (236)	39 (174)	30 (615)	39 (330)	23 (70)

a,***p<.001; b,**p<.01; c,*p<.05

least often (41%) apply interest and participation in sports as being an important index of popularity.

With the exception of general girls (21%), about a third of the work-bound students in both types of high schools report (Table 5-6f) no leading groups in their schools, whereas about a quarter of the academic students report no leading groups. Consistent with these observations, more academic students (Table 5-6g, boys 50%; girls 45%) report membership in the "leading crowds" of their schools, with fewer commercial (boys 39%; girls 30%) and general students (boys 39%; girls 23%) claiming membership. Apparently, leading crowds are less prevalent in vocational schools, where very few students (boys 23%; girls 18%) report being members. Once again, according to the students' views, work-bound comprehensive students are at a disadvantage in participating in an activity or belonging to a group when compared to academic students.

To summarize, the opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities and sports are not viewed as better for work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools than for work-bound youth in vocational high schools. The involvement seems to be the same in these two types of schools for work-bound students, although this similarity probably exists for different reasons. However, work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools do not report having equal experiences or opportunities to engage in sports and extracurricular activities. Rather, students in the academic programs, who place greater emphasis on sports and extracurricular activites as part of their social systems, predominate in these high-school activites. In addition, academic students, more than commercial or general students belong to the leading crowds in their comprehensive high schools. Much lower leading-crowd memberships are reported among vocational high-school students. Indeed, it is very likely that the nature of a leading crowd in a vocational school is quite different compared to one in a comprehensive high school. Vocational students, in interviews, have expressed distaste for the leading-crowd conditions of neighboring comprehensive high schools and cited these conditions as part of their reasons for preferring vocational high schools. These findings offer further evidence against the stereotype of superior experiences for work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools.

C. Behaviors outside of school

Differences in in-school experiences among the students in the four educational tracks may be extended by examining behaviors and activities outside of school. Of course what students do outside of school also partly reflects their socio-economic status,

TABLE 5-7

Students' Responses to Items About Behaviors Outside of School

Item	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) (Item:S442) Percent who say they do a great deal or much serious reading.	21%[a] (1660)	23%[a] (970)	25*** (379)	37*** (243)	12 (175)	22 (622)	14 (335)	24 (72)
(b) (Item:S443) Percent who report going to the movies one or more times a week.	19%[a] (1640)	24%[c] (970)	11*** (379)	15*** (243)	19 (175)	25 (621)	22 (336)	20 (72)
(c) (Item:S445) Percent who report watching TV three or more hours a day.	35%[a] (1640)	37%[a] (960)	30*** (379)	17*** (243)	50 (175)	48 (622)	48 (336)	46 (72)
(d) (Item:S439) Percent who have their own car.	36%[a] (1680)	11%[a] (980)	15** (378)	3 (243)	15 (174)	4 (621)	24 (333)	3 (72)
(e) (Item:S375) Percent who spend four or more evenings a week at home.	55% [a] (1840)	77%[a] (1040)	72*** (319)	86*** (234)	56 (119)	70 (445)	45 (185)	73 (63)

(Table continued)

TABLE 5-7

(Continued)

Item	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(f) (Item:S267) Percent who have a job outside of school.	55%[a] (1950)	34%[a] (1055)	45 (323)	27* (231)	43 (122)	24 (450)	53 (195)	39 (62)
(g) (Item:S438) Percent who date once a week or more.	51%[a] (1670)	62%[a] (964)	34** (378)	42*** (243)	45 (175)	62 (619)	45 (335)	60 (72)
(h) (Item:S359) Percent who attend religious services every week.	43%[a] (1857)	57%[b] (1041)	55** (330)	67 (236)	61 (127)	64 (476)	44 (202)	60 (64)

a,***p<.001;b,**p<.01;c,*p.05.

but is is worth exploring these behaviors in order to compare the experiences of work-bound youth from similar social classes under different high-school conditions.

Serious reading outside of school (Table 5-7a) is more often reported by vocational (21%) and academic (25%) boys; commercial (12%) and general (14%) boys significantly less often do serious reading outside school. Similar results are found among the girls (academic 37%; commercial 22%; general 24%), except that vocational girls'(23%) reading habits are similar to the other work-bound girls!

Movie attendance one or more times a week (Table 5-7b) is more prevalent among work-bound youth than among college-bound youth. Similarly, watching three or more hours of television a day (Table 5-7c) is most frequent among comprehensive high school work-bound students, next most frequent among vocational high school students, and least frequent among college-bound comprehensive high-school students. Apparently, academic students have less time to devote to entertainment because of their greater involvement in educational activities.

Vocational students (boys 36%; girls 11%) far outnumber the academic (boys 15%; girls 3%), commercial (boys 15%; girls 4%), and general (boys 24%; girls 3%) students who own cars (Table 5-7d). In comprehensive high schools, the general boys are the ones with the greatest percentage of cars.

Far more academic students (boys 72%; girls 86%) report staying at home four or more evenings a week (Table 5-7e). On this item, vocational students (boys 55%; girls 77%) are similar to the commercial students (boys 56%; girls 70%), whereas general boys (45%) least often spend this much time at home. General girls (73%) do not differ from the other work-bound girls in staying at home.

Vocational students (boys 55%; girls 34%) and general students (boys 53%; girls 39%) lead the four groups of students shown in Table 5-7f in holding jobs outside of school.

Work-bound youth in both types of high schools say that they date one or more times a week appreciably more often than college-bound youth (Table 5-7g).

In terms of attendance of religious services, academic (55%) and commercial (61%) boys report attending every week considerably more often than vocational (43%) and general boys (44%). All girls appear to attend religious services more often than boys, but the differences among the girls are not as great, although the pattern by programs is about the same.

Differences among work-bound and college-bound youths' reported behaviors outside of school may be summarized by pointing out that college-bound youth appear to suppress involvements that are incompatible with their educational goals. They (a) go to the movies less often, (b) watch less television, (c) less often own cars, (d) spend more evenings at home, (e) have fewer jobs outside of school, and (f) are lighter daters than their work-bound counterparts. On serious reading not for school, however, they report spending more time than commercial and general students, although vocational boys read about as much as academic boys. Vocational students are similar to other work-bound students on these outside-school behaviors, except that the boys own far more cars than comprehensive-school students (which may be related simply to their greater opportunities in school to work on their cars as part of their training.)

To recapitulate the findings of this section, we set out to explore the differences in the experiences of students in the various programs with the idea of testing the notion that comprehensive high-school programs offer superior experiences to vocational high schools to their work-bound students. This idea was examined through items dealing with (a) school achievement and satisfactions, (b) involvement in school activities, and (c) behaviors outside of school.

Our findings are that (a) vocational and academic students report achieving more in school and being more satisfied with school than commercial and general students; (b) the opportunity for participation in extracurricular activities and sports in high school is viewed as no better for comprehensive high school work-bound youth than it is for vocational high school work-bound youth; (c) outside of school, academic students report indulging in entertaining behaviors and activities far less often than all work-bound students, regardless of type of high school.

These findings from the perceptions of students are interpreted as negating the stereotype that comprehensive high-school experiences are superior to vocational high-school experiences for work-bound youth. What they seem to suggest is that work-bound students in comprehensive high schools, particularly general students, suffer perceived inferior status and experiences as a result of having to vie with college-bound youth.

3

III. Student Aspirations in the Various Programs

The third avenue of insights into the conditions in vocational and comprehensive high schools is provided by looking at the aspirations of students in the different types of schools. Indices include (a) ideas about the best way to get ahead in life, (b) qualities preferred in a job, (c) plans to finish high school, (d) plans to go to college, and (e) a comparison of jobs expected with jobs preferred fifteen years after high school.

Table 5-8 presents the students' choices among six ways to get ahead in life (collapsed to four categories). Presumably, their choices are the routes they see as best facilitating success for them. A problem with the item from which these results are drawn is that one of its choices is biased toward the academic students. Had "learn a trade" been a choice we would expect the distribution of responses to be quite different. Perhaps the main value of Table 5-8 is that, among all students, the most popular choice by far is working hard. However, this route to getting ahead is more often subscribed to by vocational (57%) and general (58%) boys than by academic (46%) and commercial (48%) boys. The pattern among the girls is somewhat different, with the vocational and academic girls falling midway between the commercial (54%) and general girls (46%). Academic boys and girls also place less stock in having a pleasant personality than do the work-bound youth, being most partial to getting a college education (boys 31%; girls 26%). Work-bound youth, especially among the boys, have differential values regarding college (commercial 20%; vocational 16%; general 9%). Knowing the right people, saving money, and having a special talent, collectively, drew the fewest choices as ways to get ahead in all groups.

Students not only have different ideas about how they can best succeed or get ahead in life, they have different criteria or preferences for success. Table 5-9 contains the students' first choices of qualities preferred in a job. High income is more readily chosen by work-bound youth than by college-bound youth. Job security ("no danger of being fired") and short hours, two relative and banal qualities, receive little attention by all students, although commercial and general boys somewhat more often prefer job security. Chances for advancement and a feeling of accomplishment are about equally important among the boys, although commercial boys seem most and general boys seem least concerned about advancement. A feeling of accomplishment is higher among academic and vocational boys and lower among commercial boys. On the feeling of accomplishment, all girls far exceed all boys in preferring it as a job quality, and academic girls place their greatest emphasis on this preference in a job.

TABLE 5-8

Students' Choices on the Best Way to Get Ahead in Life

(Item:S313)

Way to Get Ahead	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
1. Work hard	57%[a]	50%[a]	46***	49***	48	54	58	46
2. Pleasant personality	17	38	13	22	18	32	17	35
3. Get college education	16	8	31	26	20	9	9	6
4. Know right people	10		10		14		16	
5. Save your money								
6. Have special talent		4		3		5		13
N Respondents	(1902)	(1050)	(371)	(243)	(163)	(587)	(293)	(63)

a,*** p <.001; b,** p <.01; c,* p <.05.

TABLE 5-9

Students' Preferences in a Job

(Item:S323-27)	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
Preference	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
1. High income	37%[a]	22%[a]	34***	15***	40	32	42	28
2. No danger of being fired	6	4	5	3	9	4	10	6
3. Short hours and lots of free time	3	2	3	2	2	1	3	2
4. Chances for advancement	27	29	25	17	31	30	22	19
5. A feeling of accomplishment	27	42	33	64	19	34	22	45
N Respondents	(1902)	(1050)	(368)	(242)	(164)	(591)	(268)	(67)

a,***p<.001; b,**p<.01; c,*p<.05.

Table 5-10a shows that almost all students plan to finish high school. The only notable difference occurs between the academic students (98%) and the general students (92%).

Percentages of students planning to go to college by high-school program are presented in Table 5-10b. As expected, the great majority of the academic students (boys 77%; girls 76%) plan to go to college. Surprisingly, however, a large number of work-bound boys aspire to go to college (vocational 32%; commercial 37%), the general students aspiring least often (24%) to enter college.

It is noteworthy that, contrary to popular belief, vocational students express a future orientation as often as academic and commercial students and slightly more often than general students (Table 5-10c).

Finally, Tables 5-11 and 5-12 present the distributions of occupational categories aspired to and expected, respectively, in fifteen years after high school by students in the four programs. Looking at Table 5-11 first reveals that very few students say "don't know" what their ideal job would be in fifteen years. Second, for all boys, especially, we note an overloading in the professional category, other categories being chosen differentially by program. Boys in vocational and general programs who do not aspire to professional careers are usually in the "skilled" category, but the commercial boys not in professions are scattered fairly evenly across the unskilled, skilled, clerical, and managerial categories. Relatively few academic girls aspire to be housewives, whereas one-quarter of the commercial and general girls, and more than a third of the vocational girls, would ideally like to be housewives, Most academic girls have their sights set on professional positions; most commercial girls seek clerical and sales positions. General girls prefer all positions, excluding skilled and managerial positions.

A somewhat different picture exists for jobs actually expected in fifteen years (Table 5-12). First, we note that there is a marked increase in the "don't know" category, especially among the three comprehensive high-school programs, but mostly among the boys and the general students. Being a housewife soars to about double the aspired proportions. A drastic reduction occurs in the professional category for all boys and girls, the percentage drop being least among the vocational students, where it seems to filter back to the skilled category. Commercial boys scatter back into all categories, while general boys expect more unskilled jobs, and, as we have seen, are more uncertain as to what to expect. Most of the changes for the girls from aspiration to expectation are taken up by the housewife category.

TABLE 5-10

Students' Responses to Finishing High School, Going to College, and Future Orientation

Item	Vocational Boys	Vocational Girls	Academic Boys	Academic Girls	Commercial Boys	Commercial Girls	General Boys	General Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) (Item:S453) Percent who plan to finish high school.	96%[a] (1590)	96%[b] (943)	98** (378)	98* (243)	95 (175)	98 (623)	92 (332)	92 (72)
(b) (Item:S457)[1] Percent who plan to go to college.	32%[a] (1500)	25%[a] (1000)	77*** (376)	76*** (242)	37 (17[illegible])	16 (618)	24 (330)	10 (71)
(c) (Item:S316-18) Percent who believe it is best to live for the future.	58% (1902)	51% (1002)	57*** (371)	53 (241)	60 (171)	54 (608)	51 (285)	47 (64)

a,***p<.001; b,**p<.01; c,*p<.05.

[1] Item:S133 in 1965 questionnaire was worded differently.

TABLE 5-11

Occupational Categories Aspired to in Fifteen Years by Students

(Item:S449-50)

Ideal Job	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
Don't know	2%a	1%a	2***	2***	4	0	2	0
Farmer (Housewife for girls)	1	37	1	14	1	23	2	23
Unskilled and Semi-skilled	8	13	3	3	11	6	10	23
Skilled	36	1	6	1	8	0	40	1
Clerical and Sales	1	19	2	8	9	52	1	19
Managerial	7	3	8	3	11	1	2	0
Professional	45	26	79	70	57	19	44	34
N Respondents	(1430)	(906)	(358)	(239)	(170)	(616)	(283)	(70)

a,***$p<.001$; b,**$p<.01$; c,*$p<.05$.

TABLE 5-12

Occupational Categories Expected in Fifteen Years by Students

(Item:S451-52	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
Real Job	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
Don't know	10%[a]	3%[a]	14***	4***	15	3	20	6
Farmer (Housewife for girls)	0	55	0	36	1	46	2	45
Unskilled and Semi-skilled	10	12	8	3	16	4	15	22
Skilled	43	1	9	0	10	0	38	0
Clerical and Sales	1	15	3	7	20	39	1	9
Managerial	4	1	5	2	13	1	2	2
Professional	32	13	61	48	25	7	23	15
N Respondents	(1313)	(874)	(334)	(239)	(155)	(594)	(261)	(64)

a,***$p<.001$; b,**$p<.01$; c,*$p<.05$.

To sum up this section, we find that among all students working hard is most often chosen as the best way to get ahead in life. In terms of what they prefer in a job, academic students (girls more than boys) stress a feeling of accomplishment, while they place less value than others on high income. Vocational and commercial boys are more interested than general boys in advancement; vocational boys show a greater concern for accomplishment than commercial and general boys. General students have the lowest expectation of finishing high school and going to college. Almost 80% of the academic students propose to go to college. About a third of the vocational and commercial students plan to attend college. After the academic students, almost all of whom aspire and expect to be in professional jobs in fifteen years, vocational students show the next strongest aspiration for professional positions. The other vocational students seem committed to skilled jobs. Commercial students, in both their aspirations and expectations, scatter equally over all occupational categories. General students withdraw from high aspirations to the unskilled jobs and to uncertainty. Vocational students are least often reduced to uncertainty about what they will be doing in fifteen years. These findings lead us to believe that, among work-bound adolescents, the aspirations produced in vocational high schools are at least as desirable as, if not more desirable than, the aspirations produced by comprehensive high schools.

IV. Relative Influence of Family on Students in Different Programs

We have seen in earlier chapters of this report that parents are very influential among the vocational students in our sample. Parents were found to be the prime sources of information and influence in entering a vocational high school and/or particular program in that high school. In terms of person orientation, the great majority of the vocational students, by preferring the opinions of their parents to those of their friends and teachers, showed themselves to be parent-oriented. We do not have the information necessary to ascertain person orientation among comprehensive high-school students. Rather, what we will examine is information about parental influence to do well in school, parental pressure to go to college, and closeness of student to parent.

Table 5-13 shows the students' first-choice among responses to a question on what they strived for during their high school days. The two most frequently chosen alternatives are "pleasing parents" and "learning as much as possible in school," with "being accepted and liked by other students" and "living up to religious ideals" receiving less attention, respectively, by all students. Vocational and academic students are somewhat less concerned with pleasing their parents than commercial and general students. In addition,

TABLE 5-13

Students' First Choices on Things to Strive for in High School

(Item:S319-22

	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
1. Pleasing my parents	31%[c]	32%[a]	28*	27***	40	41	38	38
2. Learn as much as possible in school	40	31	43	39	36	35	35	19
3. Live up to religious ideals	11	20	9	16	5	8	6	11
4. Be accepted and liked by other students	18	18	20	18	20	17	22	33
N Respondents	(1870)	(970)	(336)	(236)	(162)	(571)	(275)	(64)

a,***p<.001; b,**p<.01; c,*p.05.

vocational and academic students (especially girls) more often express concern over religious ideals than commercial and general students.

The percentages of mothers and fathers who "get after" their sons and daughters to do well in school are shown in Table 5-14a and b). For the boys, more comprehensive high-school mothers get after their sons than vocational high-school mothers, with the commercial students' mothers far outstripping academic and general mothers in getting after their sons. Much the same pattern occurs for the girls and their mothers. More fathers of commercial students similarly pressure their children to do well in school. Boys always receive more attention from parents about doing well in school than girls. Thus, these results show that fewer vocational than comprehensive students either require or receive prompting from their parents about school. Both commercial and general students receive a good deal of prompting from their parents; the commercial parents give more than the general parents.

Table 5-14 c and d shows the percentages of mothers and fathers who pressure their children to go to college. Not unexpectedly, more academic students are pressured to go to college by their parents. One is tempted to observe, perhaps more for the girls than for the boys, that parental pressure to go to college largely is a strong determinant for a student's being in the academic program. Indeed, informal interviews with high-school students reveal that parental pressure to go to college is felt by students to be the principal reason why many boys and girls are in the academic track -- which is seen by students as grueling and forbidding. Some support for their observations was presented in the subsection on behaviors outside of school, where academic students were found to be involved less frequently in entertaining behaviors that are not conducive to excelling in school. At any rate, parental pressure to go to college is more often applied among comprehensive high-school students than among vocational high-school students. A review of Table 5-10 b, however, will show that, in terms of those who aspire to continue their educationa, the work-bound youth in the vocational school seem to be influenced more successfully by their parents than work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools. This is especially noticeable when we observe that the higher percent of commercial mothers (62% vs vocational 35%) and fathers (53% vs vocational 29%) applying pressure for their sons to go to college realize lower returns (percentages aspiring to go to college; commercial 37% vs vocational 32%) for their efforts.

In Table 5-15, we show the students who say that they feel extremely close to their mothers and fathers, respectively. The outstanding finding of Table 5-15 is the low percentages of academic

TABLE 5-14

Students' Responses Regarding Parental Pressure to do Well in School and to go to College

	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) (Item:S132) Percent whose Mothers get after them to do well in school.	38%[a]	35%[a]	48*	38	62	56	53	40
(b) (Item:S131) Percent whose Fathers get after them to do well in school.	38%[c]	25%[a]	41	25**	48	38	43	30
(c) (Item:S154) Percent whose Mothers pressure them to go to college.	35%[a]	20%[a]	89***	87***	62	36	39	25
(d) (Item:S153) Percent whose Fathers pressure them to go to college.	29%[a]	17%[a]	83***	82***	53	30	34	16
N Respondents	(1820)	(1010)	(368)	(241)	(164)	(602)	(316)	(68)

a,***p<.001; b,**p<.01; c,*p<.05.

TABLE 5-15

Students' Expression of Closeness to Parents

(Item:S427 & 435)	Vocational		Academic		Commercial		General	
	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls	Boys	Girls
N =	(1981)	(1079)	(379)	(243)	(175)	(622)	(336)	(72)
(a) Percent extremely close to mother	24%[a] (1563)	28%[b] (912)	18*** (358)	31 (236)	42 (151)	36 (542)	31 (228)	24 (66)
(b) Percent extremely close to father	21%[a] (1563)	17% (912)	18*** (336)	17** (225)	37 (142)	20 (504)	27 (222)	17 (60)

boys who feel very close to their parents; fewer academic than work-bound boys express a feeling of being extremely close to their parents. Academic girls do not differ much from the other groups of girls in closeness to parents. Pleasing parents (Table 5-13), it will be remembered, was least subscribed to by academic students as a thing to strive for in high school. So this expression of greater distance from parents is not completely surprising. But why do students who do not feel close to their parents comply with their wishes to plan for college (Table 5-14)? The answer may be that these boys are not as close to their parents because of the extreme pressure their parents apply to them and the more rigorous program they force them into.

In summing up this section on the relative influences of the family on students in the different programs, we find evidence that suggests that comprehensive high-school students (especially the work-bound students) receive more prompting to do well in school from their parents than do vocational high-school students. We also note that parental pressure to go to college is a strong determinant of being in a college-bound program and aspiring to go to college. Finally, academic boys do not express the same degree of closeness to their parents as the other students and we suggest an association between this coolness toward their parents and the extreme pressure their parents apply to them about going to college, the college-bound program being seen as a grueling and forbidding course to pursue.

Summary

The main purpose of this chapter was to empirically examine the stereotype that the educational and related experiences offered to work-bound students in comprehensive high schools are perceived to be superior to those offered to work-bound students in vocational high schools. We traced the source and support for this stereotype to the common American belief about the great value of a college education and to the impressions presented by Conant.

Our approach to examining this stereotype, which has important consequences for vocational education, was to analyze (1) ascribed status differences among students in different programs, (2) differences in the experiences of students in the various programs, and (3) differences in the aspirations of students in the various programs. We also explored briefly the relative influences of the parents of students in the different programs.

Analyses from these various perspectives lead us to conclude that the educational and related experiences of work-bound students in vocational high schools are seen as at least as worthwhile as those of all students in comprehensive high schools and, in many instances, superior to those of work-bound students in comprehensive high schools. The major observations resulting in these conclusions are that: (1) social-class advantages and disadvantages are perpetuated in comprehensive high schools, (2) performance, satisfaction, and opportunity to participate in activities are biased by student program there, (3) the aspirations and expectations of vocational high-school students often are more clearly defined and as constructive as those of academic and commercial students in comprehensive high schools, and superior to those of general students.

Chapter 6

American and Danish Vocational Students Compared

In this chapter, we compare American specialized vocational high-school students with their counterparts in the Danish educational system. The precursor of this study (Kandel, et al., 1968) compared American academic students with Danish academic students. Indeed, their observation that academic students do not predominate in, and therefore are not exactly representative of, the Danish "secondary" schools was instrumental in exposing the need to study vocational students in the United States. In any event, a detailed account of the reasons for choosing Denmark as the contrasting society is given in Kandel, et al., 1968. In this study, suffice it to say, Danish vocational schools provide a meaningful comparison because they operate within a culture that is more accepting of vocational education preparation than is ours. Thus, as we understand it, aspiring to enter a blue-collar occupation is reputedly as respectable as alternative educational endeavors among Danes; we in America can not make the same claim as freely.

The purpose of this chapter is to compare the experiences and conditions of American vocational high-school students with those of Danish vocational high-school students in order to learn whether and in what ways our students' perceptions differ from those of students in a culture where vocational education is nurtured instead of disdained. This is yet another, albeit indirect, way of gaining insights into American stereotypes about vocational high schools. Our comparisons are organized around four themes that appear in other chapters in this report: (a) on becoming a vocational student; (b) satisfaction and achievement in vocational school; (c) students' outlooks on work and success; and (d) family influences among students. Before presenting the results of our comparisons in these areas, we briefly describe the Danish sample and draw a rough sketch of the Danish educational system with comments about their vocational high-school programs.

I. Danish Sample and Educational System

Concurrent with our March, 1967, collection of data from 3,060 American vocational high-school students, Danish investigators and their staff administered their questionnaires, containing many of the items in the American questionnaires, to 2,331 students in fourteen Danish vocational high schools. Eight of the Danish schools are technical schools (boys 920; girls 88) and six are commercial schools (boys 523; girls 800). Unlike vocational high schools in the United States, in which commercial, technical, and trade and industrial programs are combined in one school, the Danes have separate commercial and technical (with trade and industrial programs) high schools.

In Denmark, children begin school at age seven and are required to attend school until they are fourteen, at which time they may cease going to school. We understand that most (70-80%[1]) do not exercise this option. After the seven years of compulsory education, Danish youth choose from among three educational lines, apparently with a certain amount of parental guidance and persuasion, the one that they want to follow. The three lines are (1) the almen line, (2) the real line, and (3) vocational school. Roughly, the almen line provides a general education, the real line offers preparation for the gymnasium (higher education), and we already have seen that vocational school serves both commercial and technical (including trade and industrial programs) occupational preparations. The vocational schools may operate on a cooperative education basis, or what the Danes call an apprenticeship system, whereby vocational students work at their trades and attend classes according to some alternating plan. Cooperative programs are not uncommon in the United States and a large number of American vocational students hold after-school jobs related to their trade preparations. All in all, except for the separate technical and commercial schools in Denmark, the two vocational high-school systems are comparatively similar. We should stress again that we refer only to specialized vocational high schools in American in making our comparisons.

II. On Becoming a Vocational Student

In this section we discuss two items that appeared in both American and Danish questionnaires pertaining to influences on adolescents in becoming vocational students: (1) factors that helped students decide to attend a vocational high school and (2) persons who helped them decide which trade to study. We have presented the results for these items in Chapter 3 for the American students alone. Here, as in the other sections of this chapter, the responses to these items are presented for American vocational, Danish technical, and Danish commercial students separately. The results of chi-square tests of independence between type of student (by country) and the variable in a contingency table are indicated separately for males and females by asterisks next to the percentages in the American vocational students' column of a table.

---

[1] Kandel, Denise, & Lesser, G.S. Relative influences of parents and peers on the educational plans of adolescents in the United States and Denmark. Cambridge: Laboratory of Human Development, Harvard University, 1968.

Table 6-1 shows that neither Americans nor Danes report that they placed much emphasis on "wanting to be with friends" in deciding to go to a vocational high school. For the boys, the Danes (10%) say being with friends was very important a little more often than the Americans (7%). The opposite is true for the girls (Americans 16%; Danes 6%).

Practically all the Danes (boys 83%; girls 91% and 85%) and the Americans (boys 82%; girls 81%) report that they chose vocational schools in order to learn a trade (Table 6-1b). There were no differences among the boys. However, somewhat more Danish girls than American girls report this reason for going to a vocational high school. It should be remembered that the great majority of the American girls are in the equivalent of "commercial" programs, so that they probably share more with the Danish commercial girls than with the special group of Danish technical girls.

As we intimated earlier in our brief description of the Danish educational system, Danish parents have a lot to do with the line of education their children follow. Relatively speaking, we see evidence of this in Table 6-1c. Danish students (boys 37-39%; girls 43-45%) report a good deal more often than American students (boys 21%, girls 24%) that they chose vocational schools because their parents wanted them to. The Danes were also more often influenced by adult friends (Table 6-1d) and teachers and guidance counselors (Table 6-1e) than the Americans.

In terms of the persons who helped them decide which trade to study, we also find that Danes generally report receiving more help from their parents than American students (Tables 6-2 a and b). However, American vocational students report having relied much more heavily on siblings (Table 6-2c) and other relatives (Table 6-2d) than Danes. Teachers (Table 6-2f) and counselors (Table 6-2g) apparently are used to a greater degree by Americans in deciding on a trade to study. Finally, neither Danes nor Americans report having felt much confidence in friends for helping them to decide on a trade to follow.

Tables 6-1 and 6-2 may be summarized by saying that both American and Danish vocational students place little emphasis on their friends for help in deciding to go to vocational school or deciding on a trade to study. Danes receive more influence and help than Americans from their parents on deciding to go to vocational school and which trade to enter. Danes use more other people (teachers, adult friends, and counselors) than Americans in deciding to go to vocational school (Table 6-1). However, more Americans use sources other than parents in deciding on a trade (Table 6-2). In both countries, the great majority of students place a great deal of importance on wanting to learn a trade, a very practical and sober reason, in electing to attend a vocational high school.

TABLE 6-1

Importance of Various Factors that Helped Students Decide to Attend a Vocational High School

(Item:S138-45)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1951)	Girls (1059)	Boys ([illegible]6)	Girls (82)	Boys (517)	Girls (784)
	Percent saying very important					
a) To be with friends	7%**	16%***	10	6	10	6
b) To learn a trade	82	81**	83	91	83	85
c) Parents wanted me to	21***	24***	37	43	39	45
d) Adult friend suggested it	8***	7*	14	14	12	9
e) Teachers or counselors suggested it	14***	19***	25	28	27	28

***$p<.001$; **$p<.01$; *$p<.05$

TABLE 6-2

Persons Who Helped Students Decide Which Trade to Study

(Items:S114-23)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1951)	Girls (1059)	Boys (900)	Girls (85)	Boys (506)	Girls (784)
a) Mother	50%***	69%**	48	84	59	73
b) Father	55***	35***	62	67	65	65
c) Sibling	19***	32***	8	6	6	8
d) Other relative	40***	46***	8	2	7	5
e) Friend	8	5*	10	8	9	7
f) Teacher	22***	26***	11	8	13	13
g) Counselor	32***	40***	23	20	24	19

***$p<.001$; **$p<.01$; *$p<.05$

III. Satisfaction and Achievement in Vocational School

By comparing the Danish and American vocational students' perceptions of their satisfaction with and achievement in school, we can get a broad idea about the effects of the two schools on their students. Earlier, in Chapters 3 and 5, we showed that, contrary to the stereotype, American vocatinnal students are exceptionally satisfied with their schools and are considerably achievement-oriented. In this section, we see how their views of their satisfaction and achievement in vocational high school compare with those of vocational students in a country where the preparation of work-bound youth is an accepted and nurtured educational function.

Table 6-3a shows that more Danish technical boys (94%) are in the trades (apprenticeships to the Danes) they want to learn than American vocational (86%) or Danish commercial (86%) boys. Danish commercial girls (86%) are a bit more often in the trades they want than American girls (80%); the Danish technical girls are most often (98%) where they want to be, but then this really is not too surprising since technical school girls are a special group -- somewhat attested to by their small number (85).

On the other two counts in Tables 6-3 b and c, American students are least often dissatisfied with the training they receive in school (boys 10% to the Danes 14% and 30%; girls 7% to the Danes 7% and 17%) and most often extremely satisfied to work hard in school (boys 26% to Danes 18% and 15%; girls 35% to Danes 33% and 18%). In both cases, we note that the Danish technical girls are as satisfied as the American vocational girls.

Concerning their notions about achievement in school, Table 6-4a shows that more American students than Danes indicate that they feel good grades are very impottant. American boys and girls spend two or more hours on homework a day noticeably more often than Danish technical school students and about as often as Danish commercial students (Table 6-4b), although we should mention that the nature of commercial students' work makes it more conducive to being done at home than the nature of American vocational and Danish technical school work.

Tangentially related to satisfaction and achievement in school is what the student thinks is important for him to strive for during his high-school days. The students' responses to this question are shown in Table 6-5. Here as before we note that the Danish youth, except for the small group of technical school girls, are much more conscientious about pleasing parents than the American students. The Americans are more concerned about religious ideals, by which they may mean their own ideals, and all three groups are about equally concerned with being

TABLE 6-3

Students' Responses to Items Concerning Their Satisfaction with Vocational High School Experiences

	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1951)	Girls (1051)	Boys (906)	Girls (85)	Boys (506)	Girls (784)
a) (Item:S112)						
Percent taking trade (apprenticeship) they want to learn	86%***	80***	94	98	86	86
b) (Item:S137)						
Percent dissatisfied with training received in school	10%***	7%***	14	7	30	17
c) (Item:S146)						
Percent extremely satisfied to work hard in school	26%***	35%***	18	33	15	18

***$p<.001$; **$p<.01$; *$p<.05$

TABLE 6-4

Students' Responses on the Importance of Good Grades and Time on Homework

	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1968)	Girls (1075)	Boys (915)	Girls (84)	Boys (521)	Girls (775)
Grades						
a) (Item;S268)						
Percent who say good grades are very important	43%***	47%***	34	58	35	39
Homework						
b) (Item:S113)						
Percent who say they spend two or more hours a day on homework	19%***	35%***	8	13	23	31

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

TABLE 6-5

Students' First Choices on Things to Strive for While in High School

(Item:S319-22)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1870)	Girls (970)	Boys (860)	Girls (86)	Boys (493)	Girls (765)
1. Please my parents	31%***	32%***	38	33	43	51
2. Learn as much as possible in school	40	31	41	50	31	29
3. Live up to religious ideals	11	20	3	5	2	3
4. Be accepted and liked by other students	18	18	17	11	24	17

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

accepted and liked by other students, except the Danish commercial boys, who show greater concern on this choice, and the technical girls, who show very little concern. In connection with being accepted and liked by other students as something to strive for in high school, we find (Table 6-6) that the leading crowd concept is largely an American phenomenon. More than half the American vocational students say there is a leading crowd in their high schools, while only a handful of Danish students perceive such a group. For some reason, the technical girls deviate markedly from the other Danish students in this observation (boys 12% and 7%; girls 24% and 8%).

In summary, our results indicate that both American and Danish students are on the whole quite satisfied with their lots in vocational schools. If anything, American students are more satisfied with their school training, but this may be because the Danish schools, with their apprenticeships, are not as important in training functions as American schools. Concomitantly, the American students report being more satisfied to work hard in school, place more importance on good grades, and spend as much time as the commercial students and a lot more time than the technical students on homework. Differences between Danes and Americans on what to strive for during high school are small, with the Danes emphasizing pleasing their parents and the Americans stressing living up to their ideals. The leading crowd concept, although earlier found to be least prevalent among vocational students in comparison with other American students (Table 5-6g), is principally an American phenomenon when American and Danish vocational students' perceptions of it are compared. Kandel, et al. (1968) arrived at similar findings about the leading crowd in their study of American and Danish academic students.

IV. Students' Outlooks on Work and Success

American and Danish vocational high-school students' expectations and preferences about jobs and success after high school are examined in this section. We also intended to compare these three groups of students on the jobs they desired and expected to hold fifteen years after high school, but the Danish students' extremely low response rates to these items made that impossible.[2] Nevertheless, we can look at what the two countries' vocational students prefer in a job after high school, prefer in pay arrangement after graduating, and their ideas about how to succeed in life. We have shown in Chapter 5 that American voca-

---

[2] The Danes may have felt they had answered these questions when they indicated their trade, since they may be unequivocally committed to a trade through the apprenticeship system.

TABLE 6-6

Students' Perceptions of Existence of Leading Crowds in Vocational High Schools

(Item:S340)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1911)	Girls (1045)	Boys (877)	Girls (82)	Boys (471)	Girls (680)
Percent saying there is a leading crowd in their school	51%***	53%***	12	24	7	8

***p<.0001; **p<.01; *p<.05

tional students hold respectable and not inferior aspirations among American high-school students. Differences between American and Danish vocational students on these items probably reflect cultural preferences more than the effects of their respective vocational high-school systems.

First, we see (Table 6-7) that American vocational students differ substantially from the Danes in what they prefer to have in a job after high school. The Americans are more inclined to want a high income and a chance for advancement, while Danish students prefer security (no danger of being fired) and a feeling of accomplishment.

The desire for higher wages sooner by American students is demonstrated in Table 6-8. Appreciably more American vocational boys and girls want to start with average wages immediately after high school, whereas more Danes are willing to forego immediate gratification for greater remuneration in the future. In addition to being a cultural difference between the two groups of students, this greater need for immediate reward may also have a socioeconomic basis.

There is an outstanding difference between students from the two cultures on the best way to succeed in life (Table 6-9). The Americans cling largely to the idea that hard work accomplishes success; the Danes, perhaps going beyond the basic notion that hard work is prerequisite for getting ahead, more often claim that such individual and interpersonal mechanisms as knowing the right people, saving money, obtaining a higher education, and possessing a special talent are more likely to lead a person to success. These findings must surely be due to cultural differences, since comprehensive high-school students (Table 5-8) also rejected the knowing-people, saving-money, and special-talent approaches to succeeding in life.

V. Family Influences Among Students

This last section reports several comparisons of family influences between Danish and American vocational high-school students: (a) socioeconomic -status differences resulting from father's occupation, (b) parents' opinions of vocational high-school education, and (c) parental pressures on the students to do well in school.

Table 6-10 presents the students' reports of their fathers' occupations. There are some clear-cut differences between the two countries' vocational high-school students on this variable. The Danish students have many more fathers who are farmers and in managerial positions than the American students. More American students, on the other hand, have fathers in the skilled and unskilled occupational categories, and they also mention having unemployed fathers, whereas the Danes do not. Vocational students with fathers in clerical-sales or professional occupational

TABLE 6-7

Students' Preferences in a Job After High School

(Item:S323-27)	American Vocational Boys (1902)	American Vocational Girls (1050)	Danish Technical Boys (850)	Danish Technical Girls (77)	Danish Commercial Boys (501)	Danish Commercial Girls (750)
1. High income	37%***	22%***	30	12	32	24
2. No danger of being fired	6	4	24	20	18	14
3. Short hours and lots of free time	3	2	4	5	4	7
4. Chance for advancement	27	29	5	13	12	7
5. Feeling of accomplishment	27	42	37	51	34	48

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p.05

TABLE 6-8

Students' Responses to Three Jobs with Varying Delay of Gratification Requirements

(Item:S338)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1935)	Girls (1059)	Boys (903)	Girls (83)	Boys (511)	Girls (780)
After high school would choose a job with:						
1. Average pay to start	47%***	68%***	34	46	24	45
2. Low pay to start and high pay after two years	39	26	34	27	35	40
3. Very low pay to start and very high pay four years after	19	7	32	28	41	15

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

TABLE 6-9

Students' Ideas About the Best Way to Get Ahead in Life

(Item:S313)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1902)	Girls (1050)	Boys (906)	Girls (82)	Boys (506)	Girls (784)
1. Work hard	57%***	50%***	13	10	8	4
2. Pleasant personality	17	38	18	48	23	46
3. Know right people	5	3	15	5	14	7
4. Save money	2	1	11	11	9	7
5. College (or higher) education	16	8	24	7	26	18
6. Special talent	3	1	20	19	20	18

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

TABLE 6-10

Students' Responses on Fathers' Occupations

(Item: S363-64)	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1822)	Girls (949)	Boys (849)	Girls (68)	Boys (474)	Girls (748)
Unemployed	2%***	2%***	--	--	--	--
Farmer	1	--	20	16	15	16
Unskilled and semi-skilled	37	37	33	32	30	31
Skilled	37	36	19	19	15	22
Clerical-Sales	6	7	3	2	7	5
Managerial	13	12	19	28	27	22
Professional	5	6	6	3	6	6

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

categories do not abound in either country. Two points about Denmark are relevant with respect to the findings in Table 6-10: (a) about half the total population is described as rural[3] and (b) since students need not go on in school beyond age fourteen, the Danish high schools are not representative of the country's entire adolescent population. Thus, we could reasonably expect more farmers in the Danish sample and that certain segments of the adolescent population, say the poorer ones, who are proportionately less to begin with in Denmark, are not in the high schools. Perhaps the most salient point in Table 6-10 is that the two major white-collar occupational categories in each country, clerical-sales and professionals, are equally unrepresented by their children in the vocational schools.

Of those parents who do send or allow the children to go to vocational high schools, though, Table 6-11 shows that the great part of them favored their child's initial entrance into vocational school and more of them came to favor it as time passed. Slightly more American parents (9-11% in Table 6-11a) were seen as being against vocational schools for their children by the students; except for the technical girls, for whom it is understandable, practically no Danish parents were reported as being against vocational high schools for the children. To a lesser degree the same relationship is found in Table 6-11b, but here we note that for all groups of students the parents of both sexes increase in favor of vocational schools for their children. Returning to one of our first analyses in this chapter (Table 6-1c), we find that between 21% (American boys) and 45% (Danish commercial girls) of the students cited parents' wanting them to go to vocational school as a very important reason for their deciding to go. Apparently, more than parental approval of vocational high school for their children is required by many students in making their decisions to attend vocational school. This decision-making independent of parents seems to be more prevalent among American students.

Table 6-12 a and b presents the proportion of students in both countries who feel that their parents put considerable pressure on them to do well in school work. Clearly, American students are more often under pressure from their parents to perform well in school. Compared to other American students, the vocational students receive the least amount of parental pressure on school work (Table 5-14). Why so few Danish vocational students feel they are under pressure is not clear,

---

[3] From Dixon, C.W. Society, schools, and progress in Scandanavia. London: Pergamon Press, 1965.

TABLE 6-11

Parents' Reactions to Their Children Attending Vocational High School as Reported by Students

Parents Reaction to Vocational High School	American Vocational Boys (1959)	American Vocational Girls (1057)	Danish Technical Boys (920)	Danish Technical Girls (88)	Danish Commercial Boys (523)	Danish Commercial Girls (800)
a) (Item:S133)						
When Started:						
In favor of it	82%***	80%***	86	76	88	91
Didn't care	7	11	12	18	10	7
Against it	11	9	2	6	2	2
b) (Item:S134)						
Now:						
In favor of it	90%	90%	93	92	92	93
Doesn't care	5	7	7	7	7	6
Against it	5	3	--	1	1	2

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

TABLE 6-12

Parental Pressure to do Well in School Work

	American Vocational		Danish Technical		Danish Commercial	
	Boys (1951)	Girls (1057)	Boys (827)	Girls (78)	Boys (498)	Girls (765)
a) (Item:S131)						
Father pressures student to do well in school work	38%***	25%***	12	12	12	6
b) (Item:S132)						
Mother pressures student to do well in school work	38%***	35%***	14	12	14	8

***p<.001; **p<.01; *p<.05

unless it has to do with the apprenticeship system in Danish vocational education. Then, too, doing well in school may have greater consequences for areas other than acquiring a vocation, say in terms of learning social skills, for American parents than for Danish parents, so they may be more concerned about having their sons and daughters do well in many areas in school.

Summary

American and Danish vocational high-school students' perceptions were compared along four themes: (a) reasons for going to a vocational school and taking a particular trade, (b) satisfaction with and achievement in school, (c) outlooks about work and success, and (d) family influences on them. Underlying these comparisons was the idea that we could take yet another look at Americans' negative stereotypes about vocational secondary school education, by contrasting American students with students in a society that is more accepting of and positive toward the preparation of what have been termed work-bound youth.

The picture that emerges from these Danish-American comparisons is one in which the American students present themselves as being: (a) at least as serious and practical about their vocational education as the Danes, but more independent of their parents concerning their decisions; (b) more often satisfied with vocational school and with working hard at their school work, as evidenced by their greater emphasis on good grades and partly greater time spent on homework; (c) more interested in higher income, a chance to advance in their work, and working hard as a means of gaining success than the Danes; and (d) more often from unskilled and skilled workers' homes where they more often receive pressure to do well in their school work. Danish vocational students tend to come more from farm and managerial homes and place greater emphasis on pleasing parents and receive more guidance from their parents about their educational decisions. Both Danish and American students report that about 90% of their parents favor their being in a vocational high school.

These findings, along with the ones in the preceding chapters, suggest that American specialized vocational high-school students fare as well in their views of themselves and of the education they are receiving as Danish vocational students, who live in a country where vocational education is not considered degrading. Based on students' perceptions of their experiences in and feelings about vocational high schools, our results are offered as evidence for modifying the negative stereotypes and misapprehensions about these schools. Specialized vocational high schools appear to provide valued, stimulating, and productive experiences and education for their students, and perhaps should be considered a (if not the) more worthwhile and appropriate approach to preparing high-school youth for the world of work.

Chapter 7

Summary and Conclusions

This chapter summarizes the findings of our study designed to (1) examine the experiences of work-bound youth in vocational high schools, (2) compare them with those of work-bound and college-bound youth in comprehensive high schools, and (3) compare the experiences of American and Danish work-bound high school youth. The aim in this study was to examine data relevant to the stereotypes that exist about work-bound youth in vocational and comprehensive high schools, using the students' own perceptions of their ongoing experiences in these two types of schools.

Essentially, two related stereotypes account for the widespread misconception about vocational and comprehensive high schools. First, vocational schools are seen as a "dumping ground" for lazy students and slow learners. Second, comprehensive high-school education is seen as superior to vocational high-school education for work-bound youth. Although these stereotypes probably are a carry-over from the conditions of a generation or so ago, the dumping-ground image may have some current basis in reality in some vocational schools in huge urban areas. The second stereotype is more complex -- more deeply entrenched in American society -- and can not be dismissed as easily as the first.

Two main parts of the stereotype that comprehensive high schools offer superior educational experiences to vocational high schools for work-bound youth are embodied in (a) Conant's (1959, 1967) arguments favoring comprehensive high schools for work-bound youth, and (b) the widespread belief that preparation for college is the "best" high school education. Conant's arguments surely have bolstered this stereotype. His position rests squarely on the assumption that the community is served best by placing diverse educational programs under one educational roof; future holders of different statuses and occupations supposedly benefit from the opportunity to interact with and get to understand one another.[1] The preference for a college education that permeates American society supports the stereotype in its turn by fostering a concomitant distaste for "lower" educational programs.

---

[1] During our questionnaire pretesting, informal interviews with about fifty regular and vocational high school students revealed that among students in the various comprehensive high school programs barriers favoring the academic students are set up and solidified. Further, vocational students said they sought separate vocational high schools in an effort to escape the stigmas and ordeals encountered in comprehensive high school systems.

Various other beliefs are expressed about the comparative conditions and experiences of youth in comprehensive and vocational high schools:

- Vocational education does not provide for the education of the whole person.
- Placement in a vocational program tends to lower social expectations for these students, thereby limiting their aspirations unnecessarily.
- Vocational school populations are often too homogeneous in terms of experiences, capacities, and interests, as well as ethnic and socioeconomic background.
- Vocational high school provides far fewer opportunities for extracurricular interaction than does comprehensive high school.
- Vocational students have less drive to compete and achieve in high school.

However, these stereotypes really are subsumed under the two related, major stereotypes stated earlier; our analyses address these and other sub-stereotypes about work-bound youth in vocational and comprehensive high schools.

Students

Of the students in this study, 3,060 (boys 1,981; girls 1,079) attended six vocational high schools and 1,827 (boys 890; girls 937) attended three comprehensive high schools. The vocational high schools were selected from six different states to represent the distribution of separate vocational high schools in this country. The three comprehensive high schools were drawn from New England, the Mideast, and the South. Most of the schools had all, or predominantly, white students, so only whites were used in our analyses.[2] Most of the schools were four-year high schools. Agricultural and home economics were not included in the programs of the vocational schools in our sample.

---

[2] One comprehensive school was one-fifth Negro and they differed significantly from the whites on many of the items of the questionnaire. For our present purposes, the Negro subjects were not included in the data analyses.

All vocational schools had trade and industrial students, while only some had technical, distributive, business, and health education programs. Data collected from 2,331 Danish vocational students in fourteen schools were also used to make comparisons with American vocational students.

Procedure

Self-administered questionnaires were distributed to the students in the high schools by the investigators and their staff. In most of the schools, the students responded to the questionnaires in their classrooms; in the large schools, questionnaires were administered to larger groups in auditoriums. The vocational school data were collected in March, 1967, whereas the comprehensive high school students received their questionnaires in the spring, 1965. The students were promised anonymity in that their responses were to be reported as group statistics only; teachers were not present during the administration of the questionnaires. The questionnaires and items had been pretested several times in order to render them as meaningful and appropriate as possible for their respondents.

Results

The presentation of results is organized around the two global stereotypes introduced earlier: the dumping-ground stereotype and the superiority of the comprehensive high school stereotype. For the dumping-ground stereotype, we present findings on (a) the students' reasons for going to a vocational high school, (b) their valuations of vocational high schools, and (c) the distributions of occupations and education among vocational and comprehensive high school students' parents. The superiority of the comprehensive high school stereotype is examined in terms of (a) students' perceptions of school achievement and satisfaction with school, (b) student involvement in school activities, (c) student behaviors outside of school, and (d) student aspirations. Finally, we report the results of our comparisons between the Danish and American vocational students.

By and large, we have condensed the results of the preceding six chapters here; for more detailed analyses and tables of the data, the reader is referred to those chapters. The results are based on the students' perceptions of and feelings about their experiences and the conditions in their high schools as they related them on the questionnaires.

On the Dumping-Ground Stereotype

Reasons for going to a vocational high school. Why do adolescents decide to go to a specialized vocational high school? What is the relative importance of their various reasons? We asked students to respond to eight different considerations -- found in pretests to be commonly employed by students in deciding to attend a vocational high school -- by checking that each was either very, somewhat, or not important.

The reason overwhelmingly chosen as very important by both boys (82%) and girls (81%) was "to learn a trade," reflecting the very practical bent of these students.

Although mentioned considerably less often than learning a trade as very important, the items next most frequently mentioned by students involve either informal knowledge of a vocational high school or the urgings of some older person. Thus, much weight is assigned to liking a school's reputation (boys 28%; girls 37%) and to knowing a graduate of a school (boys 21%; girls 26%). Parents are mentioned only somewhat more frequently (boys 21%; girls 24%) than teachers and guidance counselors (boys 14%; girls 19%) as adults influencing entrance into vocational high school.

Considerably weaker are reasons of "to be with friends" (boys 7%; girls 16%) and "studies are easier" (boys 9%; girls 9%). The fact that relatively few students report having given major importance to friends and easy studies in deciding on a vocational school education suggests that more pragmatic objectives were given greater weight in their decisions.

Students' valuations of vocational high school. Here we deal with two different, but related, aspects of the experiences of vocational high school students, (1) the valuations students place on their programs, their training, the help they receive from the school, and other related aspects of their school life, and (2) the scholastic performances and outlooks of vocational students from their own points of view. The finding that the large majority of students elected to go to a vocational school for the very practical reason of wanting to learn a trade provides the background against which to assess the results of this section. We want to learn how the students feel about what is done to help them attain their goal of learning a trade. The fact that only a very small portion of students choose to enter a vocational high school in order to escape to easier studies leads one to expect somewhat positive orientations toward relevant scholastic endeavors and a serious appreciation for shop work from these students.

According to our results, the large majority of vocational students repeatedly express a good deal of satisfaction with their experiences in vocational high schools. More specifically, (a) most of the students (boys 86%; girls 80%) are taking the trades they want to learn; (b) most programs are viewed by the students as enjoying high statuses (boys 87%; girls 90%); (c) both male (90%) and female (93%) students are quite satisfied with the training they are receiving; (d) only a handful of students (boys 6%; girls 6%) find nothing to be satisfied with in their vocational schools; (e) most students report that they enjoy working hard in school (boys 91%; girls 95%); and (f) a great portion of the students (boys 71%; girls 75%) are pleased with the help with their future plans they receive from the school staff. It was also found that most of the students (boys 66%; girls 72%) and teachers (82%) favor vocational education in a separate vocational school to vocational education in a regular high school. In spite of this widespread satisfaction with the vocational high school experiences from within, there is reason to believe that persons outside the vocational school do not hold it in high regard. Seventy percent of the vocational school teachers report not being satisfied with the reputation of vocational schools among regular high school teachers.

The results of questions pertaining directly and indirectly to scholastic performance produce a picture of the vocational student as someone who (1) wants to get good grades, (2) does his homework to get them, and (3) works well with his fellow shop students. Vocational students also profess that it is very important for them to be good at their trades and that they (boys and girls 95%) wholly approve of others who want to be excellent students.

Our findings do not support the dumping-ground stereotype for this sample of specialized vocational high schools. Rather than being dumped and bored, the results suggest that specialized vocational high school students, for the most part, are serious, satisfied, and achievement-oriented. They prefer separate vocational high schools in which to learn their trades. They vie with one another to enter these schools, as evidenced by the relatively low student selection ratios (principals report it to be about one third) used in vocational schools. The dumping-ground stereotype may have some validity for certain vocational schools in our great urban centers. Looking at the results in a positive light, however, it appears that separate vocational high schools actually provide a satisfactory and desirable setting and education for most of their students.

Occupation and education among vocational and comprehensive students' parents. This section reports our findings on the distribution of occupations and education among the parents of vocational and the three major groups of comprehensive high-school students (i.e., academic, commercial, and general students). We studied these variables to see if there are large differences in the percentage of students from the various social levels in the four programs. Finding large differences would demonstrate that statuses derived from parents, for whatever underlying reasons, tend to perpetuate across generations, a condition that is antithetical to an important reason for having comprehensive high schools. In a democracy, the schools are expected to serve the ideal of enabling the individual to cross social-class barriers. Thus, these results are yet another way of examining the claim that vocational high schools are dumping grounds -- in this case, for students from the lower social classes.

Father's occupation is significantly related to the type of program that students enter. More boys and girls in the academic programs come from homes with fathers in clerical and sales, professional, and managerial fields; more commercial and general students have fathers in unskilled, semi-skilled, and skilled occupational categories. The distribution of father's occupations among vocational students closely resembles those of the two work-bound student programs (commercial and general) in comprehensive high schools.

Not unexpectedly, the distributions of father's and mother's education by student programs reflect the same patterns found for fathers' occupation. More work-bound students have parents with less education than college-bound (academic) students. Once again, the distributions were significantly different among students from the four programs and among the students in the comprehensive high school programs.

Thus, social-class differences exist between college-bound youth and work-bound students in both comprehensive and vocational high schools. The work-bonnd youth in both types of high school have similar social class distributions, as indicated by father's occupation and parents' education. More college-bound youth have parents with white-collar jobs and more years of education, while more work-bound youths' fathers hold blue-collar jobs and have less education. The findings reveal that if students are channeled into vocational high schools by social class, they are similarly channeled into work-bound programs in comprehensive high schools.

On the Superiority of the Comprehensive School Stereotype

This section examines students' perceptions related to the belief prevalent among the American public that work-bound students in comprehensive high schools are somehow better off than work-bound students in vocational high schools. To some extent, we already have addressed that belief indirectly: in our examination of the first stereotype, we showed that the great majority of vocational students in our sample prefer vocational programs in separate vocational high schools to vocational programs in comprehensive high schools. Here we compare the responses of vocational students in separate vocational schools and academic, commercial, and general students in comprehensive high schools regarding: (a) achievement and satisfaction in school, (b) involvement in school activities, (c) student behaviors outside of school, and (d) student aspirations. We hope to provide a more accurate view of what it means to be a work-bound youth either in a comprehensive or a vocational high school, comparing work-bound youth in each of the two conditions with college-bound youth. In addition to permitting comparisons between vocational and "academic" students, using four groups of students allows us to make comparisons among the three major student tracks of the comprehensive high school. The lack of such comparisons in other studies of high school youth, we feel, restricts the meaning of their findings.

School achievement and satisfaction. Our comparisons of students on indices of their school achievement and satisfaction with school suggest that vocational students in specialized vocational high schools and academic students in comprehensive high schools believe that they achieve more in school and are more satisfied with their schooling than commercial and general students in comprehensive high schools. Commercial students usually place third on achievement in and satisfaction with school, while general students are always last on these two counts. General students, usually accompanied by commercial students, are significantly less achievement-oriented in school than academic students. Vocational students in specialized vocational schools have many of the same achievement values and behaviors and satisfaction with school as the academic students. Thus, in terms of achievement and satisfaction, the two work-bound groups are quite different. We conclude from our results that the vocational students in separate high schools more often view their experiences as educationally valuable than do commercial and general students in comprehensive high schools. The stereotype that comprehensive schools provide superior educational experiences to those of vocational schools, as indicated by achievement orientation and satisfaction with school must be modified: academic students in a comprehensive school and vocational students in a specialized school more often view their experiences positively than do commercial and general students in comprehensive schools.

Involvement in school activities. In addition to being satisfied with school and interested in doing well at school, high school students generally give considerable attention to sports and extracurricular activities. The extent to which students report themselves participating in these school activities and the importance they place on them may be used to examine another facet of the claim that comprehensive high schools offer superior experiences and opportunities to their students.

The opportunities for participation in extracurricular activities and sports are not viewed as better for work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools than for work-bound youth in vocational high schools. Involvement in extracurricular activities and sports seems to be the same in these two types of schools for work-bound students, although this similarity probably exists for different reasons: comprehensive work-bound youth have to compete with academic students, whereas vocational students have jobs and other interests. Work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools report having fewer experiences or opportunities to engage in sports and extracurricular activities than academic students. Rather, students in academic programs, who place greater emphasis on sports and extracurricular activities as part of their social systems, predominate in these high school activities. In addition, academic students, more than commercial or general students, report belonging to leading crowds in their comprehensive high schools. Much lower leading-crowd memberships are reported among vocational high-school students. Indeed, it is very likely that the nature of the leading crowd in a vocational school is quite different compared to one in a comprehensive high school. Vocational students, in interviews, have expressed their distaste for the leading-crowd conditions of neighboring comprehensive high schools and have cited these conditions as part of their reasons for preferring vocational high schools. These findings offer further evidence against the stereotype of superior experiences for work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools.

Behaviors outside of school. Differences in in-school experiences among students in the four educational tracks may be extended by examining behaviors and activities outside of school. Of course, what students do outside of school also partly reflects their socio-economic statuses, but it is worth exploring these bheaviors in order to compare the experiences of work-bound youth from similar social classes under different high school conditions.

Differences among work-bound and college-bound youths' reported behaviors outside of school may be summarized by pointing out that college-bound youth appear to suppress involvements that are incompatible with their educational goals. They (a) go to the movies less often, (b) watch less television, (c) less often own cars, (d) spend more evenings at home, (e) have fewer jobs outside of school, and (f) "date" less than their work-bound counterparts. On serious reading not for school, however, they report spending more time than commercial and general students, although vocational boys read about as much as academic boys. Vocational students are similar to other work-bound students on these outside school behaviors, except that the boys own far more cars than comprehensive school students (which may be related simply to their greater opportunities in school to work on their cars as part of their training).

Student aspirations. A final avenue of insights into the conditions in vocational and comprehensive high schools is provided by looking at the aspirations of students in the different types of schools.

We found that among all students working hard is most often chosen as the best way to get ahead in life, this being a rather pervasive value in American society. In terms of what they prefer in a job, academic students (girls more than boys) stress a feeling of accomplishment, while they place less value than work-bound students on high income. Vocational and commercial boys are more interested in advancement than general boys; vocational boys show a greater concern for accomplishment than commercial and general boys. General students have the lowest expectation of finishing high school and going to college. Almost 80% of the academic students propose to go to college. About a third of the vocational and commercial students plan to go to college. After academic students, almost all of whom aspire and expect to be in professional jobs fifteen years after high school, vocational students show the next strongest aspiration for professional positions. The remaining work-bound students seem committed to skilled jobs. Commercial students, in both their aspirations and expectations, scatter themselves equally over all occupational categories from unskilled to professional. General students expect unskilled jobs and report uncertainty in what they expect will become of them in fifteen years. Vocational students are least often uncertain about what they will be doing in fifteen years. These findings lead us to believe that, among work-bound adolescents, the aspirations produced in vocational high schools are at least as desirable as, if not more desirable than, the aspirations produced by comprehensive high schools.

These findings dealing with students' perceptions of their achievement and satisfaction with school, involvement in school activities, behaviors outside of school, and aspirations, are interpreted as contradicting the stereotype that comprehensive high-school experiences are superior to vocational high-school experiences for work-bound youth. What they seem to suggest is that work-bound students in comprehensive high schools, particularly general students, suffer perceived inferior status and experiences as a result of having to vie with college-bound youth.

American and Danish Vocational Students Compared

American and Danish vocational high-school students' perceptions were compared along four themes: a) reasons for going to a vocational school and taking a particular trade, b) satisfaction with and achievement in school, c) outlooks about work and success, and d) family influences on them. Underlying these comparisons was the idea that we could take yet another look at Americans' negative stereotypes about vocational secondary school education, by contrasing American students with students in a society that is more accepting of and positive towards the preparation of what have been termed work-bound youth.

The picture that emerges from these Danish-American comparisons is one in which the American students present themselves as being: a) at least as serious and practical about their vocational education as the Danes, but more independent of their parents concerning their decisions; b) more often satisfied with vocational school and with working hard at their school work, as evidenced by their greater emphasis on good grades and partly greater time spent on homework; c) more interested in higher income, a chance to advance in their work, and working hard as a means of gaining success than the Danes; and d) more often from unskilled and skilled workers' homes where they more often receive pressure to do well in their school work. Danish vocational students tend to come more from farm and managerial homes and place greater emphasis on pleasing parents and receive more guidance from their parents about their educational decisions. Both Danish and American students report that about 90% of their parents favor their being in a vocational high school.

These findings, along with the ones in the preceding chapters, suggest that American specialized vocational high-school students fare as well in their views of themselves and of the education they are receiving as Danish vocational students, who live in a country where vocational education is not considered degrading. Based on students' perceptions of their experiences in and feelings about vocational high schools, our results are offered as evidence for modifying the negative stereotypes and misapprehensions about these schools. Specialized vocational high schools appear to provide valued, stimulating, and productive experiences and education for their students, and perhaps should be considered a (if not the) more worthwhile and appropriate approach to preparing high-school youth for the world of work.

Conclusions

In an attempt to examine two global and long-unchallenged stereotypes about the experiences and conditions of work-bound youth in vocational and comprehensive high schools, we gathered the perceptions of 3,060 vocational and 1,827 comprehensive high school students. The two misleading stereotypes prevalent in the American public are (1) that vocational high schools are dumping grounds for lazy students and slow learners and (2) that the experiences and education of comprehensive high schools are perceived as superior to those of vocational high schools for work-bound youth. For the first stereotype, we looked at (a) students' reasons for entering vocational high schools, (b) their valuations of vocational high schools, and (c) the occupational and educational distributions among vocational, academic, commercial, and general students' parents. The second stereotype was examined in terms of (a) the various students' perceptions of school achievement and satisfaction with school, (b) student involvement in school activities, (c) student behaviors outside of school, and (d) student aspirations.

Our findings are that students go to vocational schools for serious, practical reasons, that they are satisfied and strive to achieve their goals there, and that they are in social milieus much the same as those found among the work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools. In short, we found the dumping-ground stereotype to be unwarranted and inaccurate among the specialized vocational schools of our sample.

In comparison with the academic, commercial, and general students in comprehensive schools, vocational students have more positive perceptions of their achievements in and satisfactions with school than commercial and general students, sharing the academic students' perceptions; they do not lack opportunities at extracurricular school activities compared to their work-bound counterparts in comprehensive schools, who do have fewer and less than equal opportunities at these activities because they share them with college-bound youth; and the aspirations of vocational students are at least as desirable as, and probably more admirable than, those of work-bound youth in comprehensive high schools.

The two global stereotypes about youth in vocational and comprehensive high schools are no longer unchallenged. The stereotypes will be redressed only insofar as these results allay the misunderstandings that the stereotypes generate about separate vocational high schools. Furthermore, the results suggest that there are positive grounds for continuing and cultivating separate vocational high schools for work-bound youth who welcome and appreciate them.

Bandura, A. & Walters, R.H. Adolescent aggression. New York: Ronald Press, 1959.

Barlow, M.L. (Ed.) Vocational education. Part I Chicago: The University of Chicago Press, 1965.

Blos, P. The adolescent personality. New York: Appleton-Century-Crofts, 1941.

Bowerman, C.E. & Elder, G.H. Variations in adolescent perception of family power structure. American Sociological Review, 1964, 29, 551-567.

Braham, M. Peer group deterrents to intellectual development during adolescence. American Sociological Review, 1965, 15, 248-258.

Coe, B.D. Vocational education in the high school. Theory into practice. Vol. 3, No. 5., Columbus, Ohio; The Ohio State University, 1964.

Coleman, J.S. The adolescent society. New York: Free Press, 1961.

Conant, J.B. The American high school today. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959.

Conant, J.B. The comprehensive high school. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1967.

Eninger, M.U. The process and product of T and I high school level vocational education in the United States. Pittsburgh: American Institutes for Research, 1965.

Ferguson, G.A. Statistical analysis in psychology and education. New York: McGraw-Hill, 1959.

Flanagan, J.C., Dailey, J.T., Shaycoft, M.F., Orr, D.B., & Goldberg, I. *Studies of the American high school*. Pittsburgh: Project Talent Office, The University of Pittsburgh, 1962.

Friedenberg, E.Z. *The vanishing adolescent*. Boston: Beacon Press, 1959.

Gordon, G.W. *The social system of the high school*. Glencoe: Free Press, 1957.

Havighurst, R.J. *The public schools of Chicago*. Chicago: The Board of Education of the City of Chicago, 1964.

Havighurst, R.J., Bowman, P.H., Liddle, G.P., Matthews, E.V., & Pierce, J.V. *Growing up in River City*. New York: Wiley, 1962.

Hawkins, L.S., Prosser, C.A., & Wright, J.C. *Development of vocational education*. Chicago: American Technical Society, 1951.

Hollingshead, A.B. *Elmtown's youth*. New York: Wiley, 1949.

Kandel, Denise B., Lesser, G.S., Roberts, Gail C., & Weiss, R. *Adolescents in two societies: peers, school, and family in the United States and Denmark*. Cambridge, Massachusetts: Laboratory of Human Development, Harvard University, 1968.

Kaufman, J.J., Shaefer, C.J., Lewis, M.V., Stevens, D.W., & House, Elaine N. *The role of the secondary schools in the preparation of youth for employment*. University Park, Pennsylvania: Institute for Research on Human Resources, The Pennsylvania State University, 1967.

McDill, E.L., Meyers, E.D., Jr., & Rigsby, L.C. Sources of educational climates in high schools. Baltimore: Department of Social Relations, The John Hopkins University, 1966.

Roberts, R.S. Vocational and practical arts education. (2nd ed.) New York: Harper and Row, 1965.

Rothney, J.W.W. The high school student. New York: Holt, Rhinehart, and Winston, 1953.

Russo, M. Area vocational schools. In American Education, U.S. Department of Health, Education, and Welfare, Office of Education, 1966.

Shimberg, B. Vocational education in perspective. Princeton: Educational Testing Service, 1966.

Silverman, Dorothy An evaluation of the relationship between attitudes toward self and attitudes toward a vocational high school. Journal of Educational Sociology, 1962-63, 36, 410-418.

Standard education almanac 1968. Los Angeles: Academic Media, 1968.

Stinchcombe, A.L. Rebellion in a high school. Chicago: Quadrangle Books, 1964.

Street, D. Vocational education in change: A policy perspective. Unpublished manuscript, University of Chicago, 1966.

Tannenbaum, A.J. Adolescents' attitudes toward academic brilliance. New York: Teachers College, Columbia University, 1962.

U.S. Office of Education, Preparatory trade and industrial training program in public schools, a directory: 1961-62. Washington: Government Printing Office, 1962.

Waller, W. *The sociology of teaching*. New York: Wiley, 1962.

Walsh, J.P. & Selden, W. Vocational education in the secondary school. In Barlow, M.L. (Ed.), *Vocation education*. Part I. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1965.

Weinrich, R.C. & Crowley, R.J. *Vocational education perceived by different segments of the population*. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan, 1964.

APPENDIX A

STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL CLIMATES

conducted by

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Boys' Questionnaire

Name_______________________________________ Age ______________
(Last) (First) (Middle)

School_____________________________________ Grade ____________

This questionnaire is part of a study being done in several trade high schools to help us learn about the interests and attitudes of the students. This is NOT A TEST; there are no right or wrong answers. We want to find out your opinion. Your answers will not be graded, and no one in this school or community will ever see your answers.

Most of the questions can be answered by writing a check on the line next to the answer you choose (like this: 3✓). Other directions are given where needed. Do not pay any attention to the small numbers next to the answer lines.

Please read each question and all the answers after it carefully before making any checks. Try to go through the questionnaire quickly, without spending too much time on any single question. Answer the questions in order. If you have a problem, raise your hand, and one of the research workers will come to answer your question.

PLEASE ANSWER ALL THE QUESTIONS TO THE BEST OF YOUR ABILITY, IN THE ORDER THEY APPEAR IN THE QUESTIONNAIRE.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

(You may start now.)

110-111. What trade are you taking in school? (Check one.)

01___auto mechanics
02___brick laying
03___barbering
04___business (or secretarial)
05___carpentry
06___cabinet (or furniture) making
07___cosmetology (beauty culture)
08___distributive education
09___electronics or electromechanics
10___electrical trade
11___machine shop
12___painting
13___plumbing
14___printing
15___other (What?_______________
_________________________)

112. Are you taking the trade you want to learn? (Check one.)

1___yes
2___no

113. How much time, on the average, do you spend doing homework outside school? (Check one.)

1___none or almost none
2___about 1/2 hour a day
3___about 1 hour a day
4___about 1 1/2 hours a day
5___about 2 hours a day
6___3 or more hours a day

154-
159. In your opinion, how important is each of the following for most students in this school? (Check a 1, 2, or 3 for each thing.)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
154. Be a leader in extracurricular activities	1___	2___	3___
155. Work hard on studies	1___	2___	3___
156. Participate in sports	1___	2___	3___
157. Be popular in school	1___	2___	3___
158. Earn some money	1___	2___	3___
159. Be good at trade	1___	2___	3___

160-
171. In your opinion, how important is each of the following things for a teen-ager? (Check a 1, 2, or 3 for each thing.)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
160. Be a leader in extracurricular activities	1___	2___	3___
161. Have a good reputation	1___	2___	3___
162. Do things together with the rest of the family	1___	2___	3___
163. Work hard on studies	1___	2___	3___
164. Participate in sports	1___	2___	3___
165. Go out on dates	1___	2___	3___
166. Be popular in school	1___	2___	3___
167. Do serious reading	1___	2___	3___
168. Earn some money	1___	2___	3___
169. Plan for the future	1___	2___	3___
170. Help around the house	1___	2___	3___
171. Respect your parents	1___	2___	3___

172. How do you feel about the help with your future plans that you receive from the school staff? (Check one.)

1____very satisfied
2____satisfied
3____dissatisfied
4____very dissatisfied
5____haven't asked for help

173. How do you rate the program you are in compared to the other programs in this school? (Check one.)

1____very high status
2____high status
3____low status
4____very low status

174. How do you think the rest of the school rates the program you are in? (Check one.)

1___very high status
2___high status
3___low status
4___very low status

175-
176. Do you think shop and academic teachers in this school treat you like . . . ? (Check one for each column.)

Shop Teachers	Academic Teachers	
1___	1___	a child
2___	2___	a teen-ager
3___	3___	an adult

176a. Of all the teachers in this school, which one do you like best? (Give full name.)

____

177. When you are faced with a decision that either friends or teachers could help you with, whose opinions do you respect more? (Check one.)

1___friends' opinions
2___teachers' opinions

178. How many of your teachers take a personal interest in you? (Check one.)

1___all of them
2___most of them
3___about half of them
4___few of them
5___one of them
6___none of them

79	80
	1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

210-
216. Which of the items below come closest to fitting most of the teachers in this school? (Check as many as apply.)

210. ___friendly
211. ___too strict
212. ___too easy with school work
213. ___understand problems of teen-agers
214. ___not interested in teen-agers
215. ___bored with their job
216. ___willing to help out in activities

217-
227. Since you have been in high school, which of the following sports, if any, have you gone out for? (Check as many as apply.)

	In school	Outside of school	
217.	1___	2___	none
218.	1___	2___	basketball
219.	1___	2___	football
220.	1___	2___	track & cross country
221.	1___	2___	winter sports
222.	1___	2___	baseball
223.	1___	2___	swimming
224.	1___	2___	lacrosse
225.	1___	2___	tennis and badminton
226.	1___	2___	soccer
227.	1___	2___	other (What?________ ___________________)

228-
239. Which of the following clubs or activities do you belong to here at school? (Check as many as apply.)

228. ___school newspaper, magazine or annual
229. ___orchestra, band, or glee club
230. ___National Honor Society
231. ___subject matter club (math club, music club, Latin club, etc.)
232. ___hobby clubs (stamp, photography, radio, chess, crafts, etc.)
233. ___debating or dramatics
234. ___between-school sports
235. ___service clubs (Beta Club, Key Club, Hi-Y, etc.)
236. ___political clubs (Young Democrats or Young Republicans)
237. ___social clubs, fraternities, or sororities
238. ___trade-related club
239. ___other (What?________________)

240-
241. If you had some free time to do whatever you enjoyed most, which of the following would you choose? (Check one.)

1___work on a car
2___make or fix something
3___play or watch sports
4___go to car races
5___hang around with friends
6___read
7___go to a movie or watch T.V.
8___ride around in a car
9___listen to records or radio
10___be with girlfriend
11___sleeping
12___other (What?____________)

242-
243. What one person do you admire most? (Check only one.)

1___my parent/stepparent
2___an older relative
3___one of my teachers
4___a guidance counselor
5___a supervisor or boss in a job
6___an older adult (friend's parent or friend of family, etc.)
7___my brother, sister, or cousin
8___my girlfriend
9___my friend in school
10___a friend who is working
11___a friend in the military service
12___other (Who?________________)

244-
246. Where are the boys who are your three best friends? (Check one for each friend.)

	1st friend	2nd friend	3rd friend
1. in this school..................	______	______	______
2. in another high school..........	______	______	______
3. in college......................	______	______	______
4. in an apprenticeship............	______	______	______
5. in military service.............	______	______	______
6. graduated, and working full time.	______	______	______
7. dropped out of school (working or not working)..................	______	______	______

246a. What boys here in school do you go around with most often? Write down the name of your closest friend here in school on the first line, the name of your second closest friend on the second line, and the name of your third closest friend on the third line. (Write both first and last names.)

Names of boys

School friend # 1 ____

School friend # 2 ____

School friend # 3 ____

247- 249. Indicate how often you see each of these friends outside of school. (Check one alternative for each friend.)

		Several times a week	Once a week	Once a month	Never
247.	School friend # 1	1___	2___	3___	4___
248.	School friend # 2	1___	2___	3___	4___
249.	School friend # 3	1___	2___	3___	4___

250- 262. In thinking about how much education you expect to complete after high school, with whom have you talked? (Check all those with whom you have talked.)

250. a___mother
251. b___father
252. c___brothers or sisters
253. d___other relatives
254. e___friends here in school
255. f___friends in other schools
256. g___friends not attending school
257. h___teachers in school
258. i___athletic coach
259. j___guidance counselor
260. k___clergyman (minister, priest, rabbi, etc.)
261. l___present or past supervisor or boss
262. m___trade school or institute representative

263- 264. Which one of the people you talked to above encouraged you most to continue your education after high school? (Circle the one letter corresponding to the person.)

a b c d e f g h i j k l m

265- 266. How do your father and mother feel about your going to college? (Check one for each.)

Father	Mother	
1___	1___	strongly encourages me to go
2___	2___	wants me to go but does not strongly encourage me
3___	3___	does not care one way or another
4___	4___	does not want me to go to college
5___	5___	parent not living or has no contact with me

267. Do you have a paid job after school? (Check one.)

1___no
2___yes, I work less than 5 hours a week
3___yes, I work 5 to 9 hours a week
4___yes, I work 10 to 19 hours a week
5___yes, I work 20 hours or more a week

268- 269. How important is it to you personally, and how important is it to other students in this school, to get good grades? (Check one in each column.)

To you personally	To other students
1___extremely important	1___extremely important
2___important	2___important
3___not important	3___not important

269a. Thinking of all the boys in this school, who would you most like to be like? (Give both first and last names.)

____

270. Where did you meet most of the boys you usually hang around with? (Check one.)

1___in my neighborhood
2___in my last school
3___in this school
4___on a job
5___other (Where?____________
______________________)

271. If you could be remembered here at school for one of the three things below, which one would you want it to be? (Check one.)

1___brilliant student
2___athletic star
3___most popular

272- 278. Which of the following clubs or organizations do you belong to outside of school? (Check as many as apply.)

272. ___Boy Scouts
273. ___YMCA, YMHA, CYO
274. ___Boys Club of America
275. ___teen club
276. ___church group
277. ___sports club
278. ___other (What?________________)

310. Do you have a steady girlfriend? (Check one.)

1___yes
2___no

311. In making decisions, whose opinion is more important to you, your steady girlfriend's or your parents' . . .? (Check one.)

1___parents' much more
2___parents' a little more
3___steady girlfriend's a little more
4___steady girlfriend's much more
5___I do not have a steady girlfrien

311a. Of all the boys in your grade which boy . . . (Give both first and last names.)

is the best dressed?

____

is the best student?

____

do girls go for most?

____

would you most like to be friends with?

____

is best at his trade?

____

79	80
	2

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

312. Do your parents ever disagree with each other about whether you should be punished, or about the kind of punishment you should get? (Check one.)

1___yes, very often
2___frequently
3___sometimes
4___very seldom
5___never

313. The BEST way to get ahead in life is to: (Check one.)

1___work hard
2___have a pleasant personality and be likeable
3___know the right people
4___save your money
5___get a college education
6___be a person with a special talent such as an actor, good athlete, or singer

314. How much effort and care do you put into your shop work when you have to work with another student on a project instead of alone? (Check one.)

1___much more
2___somewhat more
3___about the same
4___somewhat less
5___much less

315. How do you feel about a student who is serious about becoming a top student? (Check one.)

1___approve very much
2___approve
3___disapprove
4___disapprove very much

316-318. People often have very different ideas about what can be expected in life. From the answers below, put a "1" next to the choice with which you most agree; put a "2" next to the choice with which you second-most agree; then put a "3" next to the choice with which you least agree.

___I believe that man's greatest concern should be with the present time in which he lives.

___I believe that we should try to keep up the ways of the past and to bring them back when they are lost.

___I believe in the ways of the future. I think the best way to live is to look a long time ahead and work so that the future will be better.

319-322. Different people strive for different things. Among the things you strive for during your high school days, just how important is each of these? (Rank from 1 through 4: 1 for the highest in importance to you, 2 for the second highest, 3 for the third highest, 4 for the lowest.)

___pleasing my parents
___learning as much as possible in school
___living up to my religious ideals
___being accepted and liked by other students

323-327. What would you most prefer in a job? (Rank in order of importance to you from 1 to 5, using 1 for the most important.)

____high income
____no danger of being fired
____short working hours and lots of free time
____chances for advancement
____the work gives a feeling of accomplishment

328. Check the category which comes closest to your feelings about yourself. (Check only one.)

1___I don't like myself the way I am; I'd like to change completely
2___there are many things I'd like to change, but not completely
3___I'd like to stay very much the same; there is very little I would change

329. Do you think that most of the important things that happen to people are: (Check one.)

1___more the result of circumstances beyond their control
2___more the result of their own efforts

ANSWER THE NEXT THREE QUESTIONS IN TERMS OF HOW YOU FEEL ABOUT YOURSELF.

330. Every time I try to get ahead, something or somebody stops me. (Check one.)

1___agree
2___not sure
3___disagree

331. People like me don't have much of a chance to be successful in life.

1___agree
2___not sure
3___disagree

332. Good luck is more important than hard work for success. (Check one.)

1___agree
2___not sure
3___disagree

----- ----- ----- -----

333. Have you ever skipped school with a friend or friends? (Check one.)

1___never
2___once in a while
3___several times
4___fairly often

334. Have you ever been sent out of a class for misbehavior or gotten detention? (Check one.)

1___never
2___once in a while
3___several times
4___fairly often

335. When you have problems, whose ideas and opinions do you respect more, an older adult's (other than your parents) or your best friend's? (Check one.)

1___older adult's much more
2___older adult's a little more
3___about equal
4___best friend's a little more
5___best friend's much more

336. How important is it to you to be dressed in the same style as most other students in the school? (Check one.)

1___very important
2___somewhat important
3___not important

337. When you are faced with a decision that either teachers or parents could help you with, whose opinions do you respect more? (Check one.)

1___teachers' opinions
2___parents' opinions

338. If you were offered three jobs after graduating high school, which would you choose? (Check one.)

1___a job with average pay as soon as you start
2___a job with low pay for the first two years, but high pay afterwards
3___a job with very low pay for the first four years, but very high pay afterwards

339. In some schools, there seems to be one group that more or less runs things among the students. What about at this school? Is there one group that seems to be always in the middle of things, or are there several groups like that? (Check one.)

1___one group
2___two groups
3___three groups
4___more than three groups
5___no group

340. Is there a leading crowd in this school? (Check one.)

1___yes
2___no

341. Would you say you are part of the leading crowd in this school? (Check one.)

1___yes
___no

If no: would you like to be part of the leading crowd?

2___yes
3___no
4___don't care

342. If your parents were to object strongly to some of the friends you had, would you . . . ? (Check one.)

1___stop going with them
2___see them less
3___see them secretly
4___keep going with them openly

343. How important is it to you to be well liked by other students here in school? (Check one.)

1___very important
2___somewhat important
3___not important

344. What do you do, when you disagree with your group of friends about a decision they have made? (Check only one.)

1___I always go along with the group
2___I usually go along with the group
3___I usually decide for myself
4___I always decide for myself

345. Do your parents know your friends? (Check one.)

1___yes, all of them
2___yes, most of them
3___yes, some of them
4___no, none of them

346. In general, what do your parents think of your friends here in school? (Check one.)

1___approve of them very much
2___approve for the most part
3___disapprove slightly
4___disapprove very much
5___they do not know my friends

347- 351. Some problems which may arise for you are listed below. For each, indicate the one person you would rely upon most for advice and guidance. (Check only one person for each problem.)

		Teacher	Mother	Father	Brother or Sister	Friends	Guidance counselor	Clergy-man
347.	School work	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
348.	Job plans	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
349.	Personal problems	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
350.	Dating	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
351.	Choice of friends	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___

THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS ASK ABOUT YOUR FAMILY LIFE.

352. Who are you living with? (Check one.)

1___mother and father
2___mother and stepfather
3___stepmother and father
4___mother only
5___father only
6___other (Who?___________)

353. If your home was broken, how? (Check one.)

1___home not broken
2___death of one parent
3___death of both parents
4___divorce
5___separation of parents
6___other

354- 355. How many brothers and sisters do you have? (Including stepbrothers and stepsisters: Circle the number.)

354. brothers: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

355. sisters: 0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7 8 9

356. Are you . . .? (Check only one.)

1___an only child
2___the oldest child in your family
3___the youngest child in your family
4___between the youngest and oldest
5___twin

357. How long have you lived in the area served by this school? (Check one.)

1___less than one year
2___1-2 years
3___3-5 years
4___6-10 years
5___more than 10 years

358. What is your religious preference? (Check one.)

1___Protestant (What denomination?
___________________________)
2___Roman Catholic
3___Jewish
4___other (What?_______________)

359. How often do you attend religious services? (Check one.)

1___every week
2___1 to 3 times a month
3___less than once a month
4___never

360. Where were you born? (Check one.)

1___in this state
2___outside this state but in the U.S.
3___outside the U.S. (Where?_____
___________________________)

361- 362. Where were your parents born? (Check one for each parent.)

Father	Mother	
1___	1___	in this state
2___	2___	outside this state but in the U.S.
3___	3___	outside the U.S. (Where?__________ ________________)

363- 364. What is your father's occupation (or if he is retired or deceased, what was it before)? Give a full answer, such as "high school chemistry teacher," "welder in an aircraft factory," "president of a small automobile agency," "manager of a large department store."

____

____

365. Does your mother have a paid job? (Check one.)

1___yes, full-time outside the home
2___yes, full-time in the home
3___yes, part-time outside the home
4___yes, part-time in the home
5___no

366- 367. If working, what does she do? Be as specific as you can.

____

368. Do your parents give you as much freedom as you think you should have? (Check one.)

1___yes, both do
2___mother does
3___father does
4___neither does

369- 370. How much formal education did your parents have? (Check one for each parent.)

Father	Mother	
1___	1___	some grade school
2___	2___	finished grade school
3___	3___	some high school
4___	4___	finished high school
5___	5___	some college
6___	6___	finished college
7___	7___	attended graduate school or professional school after college

371- 372. Did your parents get all the education they wanted? (Check one for each parent.)

Father	Mother	
1___	1___	yes
2___	2___	yes, nearly
3___	3___	no, not quite
4___	4___	no, not at all

373. Do your parents talk to you about their problems? (Check one.)

1___yes, always
2___yes, often
3___yes, sometimes
4___no, never

374. Are your opinions about most things similar to the opinions of your parents, or are they different? (Check one.)

1___opinions are similar
2___opinions are different

375. About how many evenings a week do you spend at home? (Circle the number.)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

376. Whose company do you enjoy more, your best friend's or your parents'? (Check one.)

1___parents', much more
2___parents', a little more
3___about equal
4___best friend's, a little more
5___best friend's, much more

377. When your parents disagree with each other about something that should be done, which one usually gets his (or her) way about it? (Check one.)

1___mother, usually
2___mother, more often
3___about the same
4___father, more often
5___father, usually

378. Which parent disciplines, punishes, or corrects you more often? (Check one.)

1___father, much more
2___father, a little more
3___about the same
4___mother, a little more
5___mother, much more

79	80
	3

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

410-418. Some parents have rules for their teen-age children, while others don't. (Check each item for which your parents have definite rules.)

410. ___time for being in at night on weekends
411. ___amount of dating
412. ___against going steady
413. ___time spent watching T.V.
414. ___time spent on homework
415. ___against going around with certain girls
416. ___against going around with certain boys
417. ___eating dinner with the family
418. ___no rules for any of the above items

419. Some young people think their parents are somewhat old-fashioned or out of step in their ways of looking at things. Are your parents like this? (Check one.)

1___almost always
2___quite often
3___once in a while
4___never

420. Does your family do many things together, as a whole family? (Check one.)

1___very often
2___frequently
3___sometimes
4___almost never
5___never

421. How often do all the members of your family who live at home eat the evening meal together? (Check one.)

1___always
2___usually
3___rarely
4___never

422. How are most decisions made between you and your mother? (Check one.)

1___my mother just tells me what to do
2___she listens to me, but she makes the final decision herself
3___we make the decision jointly
4___I listen to her, but I make the final decision
5___I just decide what I will do myself

423. When you don't know why your mother makes a particular decision or has certain rules for you to follow, will she explain the reason? (Check one.)

1___never
2___once in a while
3___sometimes
4___usually
5___yes, always

424. Are there many things that you enjoy doing with your mother? (Check one.)

1___yes, almost everything
2___many things
3___quite a few things
4___hardly anything
5___nothing

425. Do you feel that you can talk over your personal problems with your mother? (Check one.)

1___none of them
2___very few of them
3___some of them
4___most of them
5___all of them

426. Would you like to be the kind of person your mother is? (Check one.)

1___yes, completely
2___in most ways
3___in many ways
4___in just a few ways
5___not at all

427. How close is your relationship with your mother? (Check one.)

1___extremely close
2___quite close
3___moderately close
4___not particularly close
5___not at all close

428. How much do you depend on your mother for advice and and guidance? (Check one.)

1___not at all
2___a little
3___quite a bit
4___very much
5___completely

429. When you have problems, whose ideas and opinions do you respect more, your mother's or your best friend's? (Check one.)

1___mother's, much more
2___mother's, a little more
3___about equal
4___best friend's, a little more
5___best friend's, much more

430. How are most decisions made between you and your father? (Check one.)

1___my father just tells me what to do
2___he listens to me, but he makes the final decision himself
3___we make the decision jointly
4___I listen to him, but I make the final decision
5___I just decide what I will do myself

431. When you don't know why your father makes a particular decision or has certain rules for you to follow, will he explain the reason? (Check one.)

1___never
2___once in a while
3___sometimes
4___usually
5___yes, always

432. Are there many things that you enjoy doing with your father? (Check one.)

1___yes, almost everything
2___many things
3___quite a few things
4___hardly anything
5___nothing

433. Do you feel that you can talk over your personal problems with your father? (Check one.)

1___none of them
2___very few of them
3___some of them
4___most of them
5___all of them

434. Would you like to be the kind of person your father is? (Check one.)

1___yes, completely
2___in most ways
3___in many ways
4___in just a few ways
5___not at all

435. How close is your relationship with your father? (Check one.)

1___extremely close
2___quite close
3___moderately close
4___not particularly close
5___not at all close

436. How much do you depend on your father for advice and guidance? (Check one.)

1___not at all
2___a little
3___quite a bit
4___very much
5___completely

437. When you have problems, whose ideas and opinions do you respect more, your father's or your best friend's? (Check one.)

1___father's, much more
2___father's, a little more
3___about equal
4___best friend's, a little more
5___best friend's, much more

438. Do you date? (Check one.)

1___no
2___yes, about once a month
3___yes, about once every two weeks
4___yes, about once a week
5___yes, about twice a week
6___yes, about three or four times a week
7___yes, more than four times a week

439. Do you have a motor vehicle of your own? (Check one.)

1___no
2___yes, motor scooter, motor bike
3___yes, motorcycle
4___yes, car

440. How important is it to you to own a car? (Check one.)

1___very important
2___important
3___unimportant
4___very unimportant

441. Whey you are faced with a decision that either parents or friends could help you with, whose opinions do you respect more? (Check one.)

1___parents' opinions
2___friends' opinions

442. Do you do much serious reading other than what you do for your courses? (Check one.)

1___a great deal
2___much
3___some
4___little or none

443. How often do you go to the movies? (Check one.)

1___never, or almost never
2___about once a month or less
3___about once every two or three weeks
4___about once a week
5___about twice a week
6___more than twice a week

444. With whom do you go to the movies most often? (Check one.)

1___by myself
2___with a date
3___with other boys
4___with a group of boys and girls
5___with members of my family

445. About how much time, on the average, do you watch T.V. during the school week? (Check one.)

1___none or almost none
2___about 1/2 hour a day
3___about 1 hour a day
4___about 1 1/2 hours a day
5___about 2 hours a day
6___3 or more hours a day

446. Sometimes boys get into fights. Do you think fighting is wrong? (Check one.)

1___yes
2___no

447. Since you have been in this school, how many fights have you been in either in school or outside of school? (Check one.)

1___none
2___one or two
3___a few
4___several

448. Once in a while a group will do something to stir up some excitement even if it is not right. What do you do when your friends decide to do this? (Check one.)

1___almost always go along
2___usually go along
3___occasionally go along
4___never go along

449-
450. If your desires could be realized, what one job would you like to have 15 years from now? (Be specific; for example, truck driver, electrical engineer, welder, machinist, carpenter, crane operator, etc.)

____

451-
452. Thinking realistically, what job do you think you will actually hold 15 years from now? (Be specific.)

____

453. Do you plan to finish high school? (Check one.)

1___yes
2___no
3___undecided

454. What did you like most about your favorite job? (Check one.)

1___have never worked
2___did not like my job
3___getting paid
4___a feeling of independence
5___the work itself
6___working with people
7___other (What?___________ _____________________)

455. If you've ever earned your own money, what have you used most of it for? (Check one.)

1___have never earned my own money
2___used it to help support my family
3___used it to help support myself
4___used it for fun
5___saved it
6___other (What?________________)

456. What are your plans right after you leave high school? (Check one.)

1___get a job
2___go into military service
3___enter an apprenticeship
4___continue my education
5___other (What?___________)

457. If you plan to continue your education after high school, check the highest level you expect to complete. (Check one.)

1___technical institute
2___two-year college
3___four-year college
4___graduate school
5___do not plan to continue

458. Some people believe that vocational students would be better off in a vocational program in a regular high school instead of a separate vocational high school. Do you agree or disagree? (Check one.)

1___strongly agree
2___agree
3___disagree
4___strongly disagree

459-470. Among the group you go around with in school, which of the things below are important to do in order to be popular? (Check as many as apply.)

459. a___be a good dancer
460. b___have smart clothes
461. c___have a good reputation
462. d___get good grades
463. e___stir up a little excitement
464. f___have money
465. g___be a leader in extracurricular activities
466. h___know what's going on in the world of popular singers, T.V., and movie stars
467. i___be athletic, interested in sports
468. j___be a good friend
469. k___have a pleasant personality
470. l___other (What?_____________)

471-472. Which one of the above is most important in order to be popular? (Circle the letter corresponding to the item.)

a b c d e f g h i j k l

79	80
	4

Please feel free to use the remaining space in the questionnaire to add to any of your answers, comment on the questionnaire, write your opinions about the values of the students of this high school, or supply whatever information you feel is important.

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION.

STUDY OF HIGH SCHOOL EDUCATIONAL CLIMATES

conducted by

HARVARD UNIVERSITY

Parents' Questionnaire

This questionnaire is to be answered by the mother. If the child's mother is not living in the same home as the child, the questionnaire should be answered by the adult family member or guardian who cares for him, preferably his stepmother or his father.

Most of the questions can be answered by a check on the line (like this: ✓), or by numbers on short lines (like this: 3). Specific instructions are given where needed. If you would like to elaborate on any question, use the blank space on the last page.

IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN ONE CHILD IN HIGH SCHOOL, ANSWER ALL QUESTIONS FOR THE OLDEST ONE ATTENDING VOCATIONAL HIGH SCHOOL.

DO NOT WRITE IN THIS SPACE

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

110. Questionnaire is filled out by: (Check one.)

1____mother
2____father
3____stepmother
4____stepfather
5____other adult (specify__________)

111. What is the sex of the child (the oldest one) attending vocational high school about whom you will be answering the questions below?

1____boy
2____girl

112. What grade is your child in during this school year 1966-67? (Check one.)

1____9th grade
2____10th grade
3____11th grade
4____12th grade

113. What is your marital status? (Check one.)

1____married
2____widowed
3____divorced
4____separated

114. Who is living in your home in addition to the child (or stepchild) for whom you are answering? (Check one.)

1____child's mother and father
2____child's mother and stepfather
3____child's stepmother and father
4____child's mother only
5____child's father only
6____other (Who?________________)

115-116. How many children do you have?

115. Number of boys____
116. Number of girls____

117- 118. How many children do you have in a regular high school?

117. Boys in high school____
118. Girls in high school____

119- 120. How many children do you have in a vocational (trade) high school?

119. Boys____
120. Girls____

121- 122. In what country and state were you and your husband born? (Check one for each.)

Husband	Wife
1____	1____in this state
2____	2____outside this state but in the U.S.
3____	3____outside the U.S. (Where?__________)

123. How long have you lived in this community? (Check one.)

1____less than one year
2____1-2 years
3____3-5 years
4____6-10 years
5____more than 10 years

124. How close do you feel to this community? (Check one.)

1____I feel that I belong here and that this is my home community
2____I feel quite close to this community but do not consider it to be my home
3____I do not feel very close to this community
4____I feel like a complete stranger in this community

125. Do you want your child to finish high school? (Check one.)

1____yes
2____no
3____don't care

126. At the time the decision was made to go to a vocational school, how did you and your husband feel about your child going to a vocational high school instead of a regular high school? (Check one.)

1____very much in favor of it
2____somewhat in favor of it
3____didn't care one way or the other
4____somewhat against it
5____very much against it

127. How do you feel now? (Check one.)

1____very much in favor of it
2____somewhat in favor of it
3____didn't care one way or the other
4____somewhat against it
5____very much against it

128. Do you (the mother) have a paid job? (Check one.)

1____yes, full-time job outside the home
2____yes, full-time job in the home
3____yes, part-time outside the home
4____yes, part-time job in the home
5____no

129- 130. If working, what do you do? Be as specific as you can.

____

131. If now working, does your family have any objections to this? (Check one.)

1____yes
2____no

132-
133. What is the occupation of your husband: What does he do? (Or if he is retired or deceased, what was it before?) Give a full answer, such as "high school chemistry teacher," "welder in an aircraft factory," etc.

____

134-
135. How satisfied are you with the kind of work your husband does and the kind of work you yourself are doing? (Check one for each.)

Husband	Wife
1____	1____completely satisfied
2____	2____satisfied in most ways
3____	3____somewhat dissatisfied
4____	4____very dissatisfied
5____	5____is not working

136-
137. What kind of work did your husband's father do for a living while your husband was growing up?

____

138-
147. Does any adult in your family belong to any community organizations, like clubs, lodges, veterans', sports, or church groups? (Check as many as apply.)

138. ____fraternal organizations (Elks, etc.)
139. ____veterans' organizations (American Legion, V.F.W., etc.)
140. ____civic or service clubs (Rotary, Chamber of Commerce, etc.)
141. ____religious social groups (Knights of Columbus, etc.)

4

142. ____hobby or sports groups
143. ____youth organizations (YMCA, Scouts, etc.)
144. ____P.T.A.
145. ____country club
146. ____labor union
147. ____other (What?________________)

148-
149. How much formal education did your husband and you have? (Check one for each parent.)

Husband	Wife
1____	1___some grade school
2____	2___finished grade school
3____	3___some high school
4____	4___finished high school
5____	5___some college
6____	6___finished college
7____	7___attended graduate school or professional school after college

150-
151. Have you and your husband gotten all the education you and he wanted? (Check one for each.)

Husband	Wife
1____	1___yes
2____	2___yes, nearly
3____	3___no, not quite
4____	4___no, not at all

152-
153. As a high school student, did you (your husband) attend a vocational school? (Check one for each.)

Husband	Wife
1____	1___yes
2____	2___no

154. Do you ever disagree with your husband about what your child should be allowed to do? (Check one.)

1____yes, very often
2____frequently
3____sometimes
4____very seldom
5____never

155. Some people believe that vocational students would be better off in a vocational program in a regular high school instead of a separate vocational high school. Do you agree or disagree? (Check one.)

1____strongly agree
2____agree
3____disagree
4____strongly disagree

156-157. How much schooling do you think most young men and women need these days to get along well in the world? (Check one for each.)

Men	Women
1___	1___more than college
2___	2___4-year college
3___	3___technical school or junior (community) college
4___	4___high school education
5___	5___grammar school education

158. Sometimes boys get into fights. Do you think fighting is wrong? (Check one.)

1____yes
2____no

159. Once in a while a group will do something to stir up some excitement even if it is not right. What does your child do when his (or her) friends decide to do this?
(Check one.)

1____almost always goes along
2____usually goes along
3____occasionally goes along
4____never goes along

160-161. If it were completely up to you, what one job would you like your child to have 15 years from now? (Be specific; for example, secretary, practical nurse, housewife, carpenter, welder, electrical engineer, dental technician, etc.)

____

162. Do you exert much pressure on your child to follow this particular choice or do you leave it up to the child? (Check one.)

1____put much pressure
2____put some pressure
3____leave it up to the child

163-164. Thinking realistically, what job do you think your child will actually hold 15 years from now? (Be specific.)

____

165. If your child were offered three jobs after graduating high school which would you like to see him choose? (Check one.)

1____a job with average pay as soon as he starts
2____a job with low pay for the first two years, but high pay afterwards
3____a job with very low pay for the first four years, but very high pay afterwards

166. If your child has ever earned his own money, what has he used most of it for? (Check one.)

1____has never earned own money
2____used it to help support the family
3____used it to help support himself
4____used it for fun
5____saved it
6____other (What?______________)

167- 178. Among the group that your child goes around with in school, which of the things below are important to do in order to be popular? (Check as many as apply.)

167. a____be a good dancer
168. b____have smart clothes
169. c____have a good reputation
170. d____get good grades
171. e____stir up a little excitement
172. f____have money
173. g____be a leader in extracurricular activities
174. h____know what's going on in the world of popular singers, T.V., and movie stars
175. i____be athletic, interested in sports
176. j____be a good friend
177. k____have a pleasant personality
178. l____other (What?________________)

79	80
	1

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9

210- 211. Among the things above that you have checked, are there any that you wish they wouldn't emphasize so much? If so, please circle below the letters referring to those items.

a b c d e f g h i j k l

212. Do you approve or disapprove of your child owning a car? (Check one.)

1____strongly approve
2____approve
3____disapprove
4____strongly disapprove

213. Do you approve or disapprove of your child having a part-time job? (Check one.)

1____child is not working
2____strongly approve
3____approve
4____disapprove
5____strongly disapprove
6____don't care

214. Do you know your child's friends? (Check one.)

1____yes, all of them
2____yes, most of them
3____yes, some of them
4____no, none of them

215. What do you think of your child's friends in high school? (Check one.)

1____I approve of them very much
2____I approve for the most part
3____I disapprove slightly
4____I disapprove very much
5____I do not know them

216. If you were to object strongly to some of your child's friends, and told him about it, do you think he would . . .? (Check one.)

1____stop going with them
2____see them less
3____see them secretly
4____keep going with them openly

217. How important is it to you that your child be well liked by other students in the school? (Check one.)

1____very important
2____somewhat important
3____not important

218- 219. If your son or daughter could be outstanding in high school in one of the three things listed below, which one would you want it to be? (If you have a boy in the vocational high school, check below.)

1____brilliant student
2____athletic star
3____most popular

(If you have a girl in the vocational high school, check below.)

1____brilliant student
2____leader in activities
3____most popular

220- 231. In your opinion, how important is each of the following things for a teen-ager? (Check only one for each item.)

	Very important	Somewhat important	Not important
220. Be a leader in extracurricular activities	1___	2___	3___
221. Have a good reputation	1___	2___	3___
222. Do things together with the rest of the family	1___	2___	3___
223. Work hard on studies	1___	2___	3___
224. Participate in sports	1___	2___	3___
225. Go out on dates	1___	2___	3___
226. Be popular in school	1___	2___	3___
227. Do serious reading	1___	2___	3___
228. Earn some money	1___	2___	3___
229. Plan for the future	1___	2___	3___
230. Help around the house	1___	2___	3___
231. Respect your parents	1___	2___	3___

232- 236. Some areas in which problems may arise for teen-agers are listed below. For each, indicate the one person a teen-ager should rely upon most for advice and guidance. (Check only one person for each problem.)

	Teacher	Mother	Father	Brother or Sister	Friends	Guidance counselor	Clergy-man
232. School work	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
233. Job plans	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
234. Personal problems	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
235. Dating	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___
236. Choice of friends	1___	2___	3___	4___	5___	6___	7___

237. What would you like your child to do right after he leaves high school? (Check one.)

1____get a job
2____go into military service
3____enter an apprenticeship program
4____continue his education
5____other (What?______________)

238. If you want your child to continue his education after high school, check the highest level you would like him to complete. (Check one.)

1____technical institute
2____two-year college
3____four-year college
4____graduate school
5____do not want him to continue

239-
240. How do you and your husband feel about your child going to college? (Check one for each parent.)

Husband	Wife
1___	1___strongly encourages him (or her) to go
2___	2___wants him (or her) to go but does not strongly encourage him (or her)
3___	3___does not care one way or the other
4___	4___does not want him (or her) to go to college
5___	5___parent not living or has no contact with child

241. How satisfied are you with the training your child receives in his school? (Check one.)

1____very satisfied
2____satisfied
3____dissatisfied
4____very dissatisfied

242-
248. Which of the categories below do you think come closest to fitting the majority of teachers in your child's high school? (Check as many as apply.)

242. ____friendly
243. ____too strict
244. ____too easy with school work
245. ____understands problems of teen-agers
246. ____not interested in teen-agers
247. ____bored with their job
248. ____willing to help out in activities

249. Have you ever gone to open house at the school, or other special school events to which parents are invited? (Check one.)

1____no, never
2____yes, sometimes
3____yes, to all events

250. How often in the past school year have you spoken to your child's teachers? (Check one.)

1____never
2____1-2 times
3____3-5 times
4____6-9 times
5____10 times or over

251-
252. Do you and your husband get after your child to do well in his school work? (Check one for each parent.)

Husband	Wife
1___	1___puts on a lot of pressure
2___	2___gets after him quite a bit
3___	3___urges him but not strongly
4___	4___lets him do what he wants about it
5___	5___does not care what he does about school

253-
255. People often have very different ideas about what can be expected in life. From the answers below, put a "1" next to the choice with which you most agree; put a "2" next to the choice with which you second-most agree; then put a "3" next to the choice with which you least agree.

____I believe that man's greatest concern should be with the present time in which he lives.

____I believe that we should try to keep up the ways of the past and to bring them back when they are lost.

____I believe in the ways of the future. I think the best way to live is to look a long time ahead and work so that the future will be better.

256-
260. Among the possibilities listed below which do you prefer in a job for your child? (Rank in order of importance from 1 to 5, using 1 for the most important.)

____high income
____no danger of being fired
____short working hours and lots of free time
____chances for advancement
____the work is important and gives a feeling of accomplishment

261-
264. Among the things teen-agers strive for during their high school days, just how important do you think each of these should be? (Rank from 1 through 4: 1 for the highest in importance to you, 2 for the second highest, 3 for the third highest, and 4 for the lowest.)

____pleasing their parents
____learning as much as possible in school
____living up to religious ideals
____being accepted and liked by other students

265. The BEST way to get ahead in life is to: (Check only one.)

1____work hard
2____have a pleasant personality and be likeable
3____know the right people
4____save your money
5____get a college education
6____be a person with a special talent such as an actor, good athlete or singer

266. Check the category which comes closest to your feeling about yourself. (Check one.)

1____I don't like myself the way I am; I'd like to change completely.
2____There are many things I'd like to change, but not completely.
3____I'd like to stay very much the same; there is very little I would change.

267. Do you think that most of the important things that happen to people are: (Check one.)

1____more the result of circumstances beyond their control

2____ more the result of their own efforts

268. Do you do much serious reading? (Check one.)

1____a great deal
2____much
3____some
4____little or none

269. About how much time, on the average, do you watch T.V. on a weekday? (Check one.)

1____none or almost none
2____about 1/2 hour a day
3____about 1 hour a day
4____about 1 1/2 hours a day
5____about 2 hours a day
6____3 or more hours a day

270- 278. Check below the rules which you have for your teen-age children. (Check as many as apply.)

270. ____time for being in at night on weekends
271. ____amount of dating
272. ____against going steady
273. ____time spent watching T.V.
274. ____time spent on homework
275. ____against going around with certain girls
276. ____against going around with certain boys
277. ____eating dinner with the family
278. ____no rules for any of the above items

79	80	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9
	2									

310. When you and your husband disagree with each other about something that should be done, which one usually gets his (or her) way about it? (Check one.)

1____mother, usually
2____mother, more often
3____about the same
4____father, more often
5____father, usually

311. Who disciplines, punishes, or corrects your child more often? (Check one.)

1____father much more
2____father a little more
3____about the same
4____mother a little more
5____mother much more

312. Some parents feel that they cannot keep up with their teen-age children. These parents feel out of step with their children's ways of looking at things. Do you ever feel this way? (Check one.)

1____almost always
2____quite often
3____once in a while
4____never

313. How often do all the members of your family who live at home eat the evening meal together? (Check one.)

1____always
2____usually
3____rarely
4____never

314. How many evenings a week does your child spend at home? (Circle the number.)

0 1 2 3 4 5 6 7

315. How are most decisions made between you (the mother) and your child? (Check one.)

1____I tell him what to do
2____I listen to him, but I make the final decision myself
3____we make the decision jointly
4____my child listens to me, but he makes the final decision
5____my child just decides what he will do himself

316. When your child doesn't know why you make a particular decision or have certain rules for him to follow, do you explain the reason? (Check one.)

1____never
2____once in a while
3____sometimes
4____usually
5____yes, always

317. Are there many things that your child enjoys doing with you (the mother)? (Check one.)

1____yes, almost everything
2____many things
3____quite a few things
4____hardly anything
5____nothing

318. How much does your child depend on you (the mother) for advice and guidance? (Check one.)

1____not at all
2____a little
3____quite a bit
4____very much
5____completely

319. How close is your relationship with your child? (Check one.)

1____extremely close
2____quite close
3____moderately close
4____not particularly close
5____not at all close

320. How are most decisions made between your husband and your child? (Check one.)

1____my husband just tells him what to do
2____my husband listens to him, but my husband makes the final decision himself
3____they make the decision jointly
4____my child listens to my husband, but he makes the final decision
5____my child just decides what he will do himself

321. When your child doesn't know why your husband makes a particular decision or has certain rules for him to follow, does he explain the reason? (Check one.)

1____never
2____once in a while
3____sometimes
4____usually
5____yes, always

322. Are there many things that your child enjoys doing with your husband? (Check one.)

1____yes, almost everything
2____many things
3____quite a few things
4____hardly anything
5____nothing

323. How much does your child depend on your husband for advice and guidance? (Check one.)

1____not at all
2____a little
3____quite a bit
4____very much
5____completely

324. How close is your husband's relationship with your child? (Check one.)

1____extremely close
2____quite close
3____moderately close
4____not particularly close
5____not at all close

325. Does your son (daughter) have a steady girlfriend (boyfriend)? (Check one.)

1____yes
2____no

326. In making decisions, whose opinion do you think is more important to your child, his steady's or his parents'? (Check one.)

0____child does not have a steady date
1____parents'much more
2____parents'little more
3____steady's little more
4____steady's much more

327- 328. What one person that you know would you most want your child to admire? (Check only one.)

1____parent/stepparent
2____an older relative
3____one of his teachers
4____a guidance counselor
5____child's supervisor or boss in his job
6____an older adult (friend of family)
7____his brother, sister or cousin
8____his girlfriend (her boyfriend)
9____a friend in school
10____a friend who is working
11____a friend in the military service
12____other (Who?________________)

329. When your child has problems, whose ideas and opinions do you feel he respects more, his parents' or his best friends'? (Check one.)

1____parents', much more
2____parents', a little more
3____about equal
4____best friends', a little more
5____best friends', much more

330. Do you and your husband talk about your problems with your child? (Check one.)

1____yes, always
2____yes, often
3____yes, sometimes
4____no, never

331. Do you and your husband ever disagree about whether your child should be punished, or about the kind of punishment he should get? (Check one.)

1____yes, very often
2____frequently
3____sometimes
4____very seldom
5____never

ANSWER THE THREE QUESTIONS BELOW ONLY IF YOU WISH.

332. How do you lean in national politics? (Check one.) Optional

1____toward the more liberal Democrats
2____toward the more conservative Democrats
3____toward the more liberal Republicans
4____toward the more conservative Republicans
5____toward a third party (Which?________________)

333. Check the group into which your family's total income falls. (Check one.) Optional

1____under $2,500
2____$2,500-$4,999
3____$5,000-$7,499
4____$7,500-$9,999
5____$10,000-$14,999
6____$15,000 or more

334. What is your religious preference? (Check one.) Optional

1____Protestant (What denomination? ________________)
2____Roman Catholic
3____Jewish
4____other (What?________________)

79	80
	3

Besides the things you have mentioned above, is there anything about this town or this school that has a particularly important effect on the development of teenagers, including your own?

Mention either positive or negative things. (Use the rest of this page, or if necessary, an added sheet, for comments.)

THANK YOU VERY MUCH FOR YOUR COOPERATION

APPENDIX B

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LABORATORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

ROY E. LARSEN HALL, APPIAN WAY
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

March, 1967

Dear Mother:

You can help in research aimed at understanding American teen-agers by filling out and returning the enclosed questionnaire.

Harvard University is engaged in a study of teen-agers in selected vocational high schools throughout the United States. This is one of the first studies of its type with vocational high school students. Charles H. McCann Regional Vocational-Technical School has participated in the study, and Mr. Westall has given us his fullest support and cooperation. We are now requesting information from the mothers of the students in the school. We are asking every mother to fill out the enclosed questionnaire. If the child's mother is not living in the same home as the child, the questionnaire should be answered by the adult family member or guardian who is responsible for him.

To be fully valuable, our study requires the completion and return of all the questionnaires mailed out. Only in this way can it represent all parents and reflect all kinds of experiences and opinions. We are counting on your cooperation.

This is not a test. There are no right or wrong answers. We are interested only in finding out about your opinions and experiences. You are assured that the information you give us will be kept confidential and will be reported only in the form of group statistics. In fact, the number we assigned to your questionnaire will help us maintain confidentiality.

Thank you in advance for the time and thought we know you will give to these questions. We realize that the questionnaire is quite long. We hope, however, that you will find it interesting. May we have your replies soon?

Please use the enclosed stamped, addressed envelope for returning the questionnaire to us.

Sincerely,

Gerald S. Lesser, Ph.D.
Director
Laboratory of Human Development

Richard F. Purnell, Ph.D.
Research Associate
Laboratory of Human Development

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LABORATORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

ROY E. LARSEN HALL, APPIAN WAY
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

March, 1967

Dear Mother:

Some time ago we sent you a questionnaire and requested your help as part of a research study of selected vocational high schools throughout the U.S. Questionnaires were sent to the mothers of all students in the high school your child is attending.

Many questionnaires have been returned to us. To be fully valuable it is essential that we have the cooperation of everyone involved so that our results will represent all parents and all opinions. All information is, of course, confidential and will be reported only in statistical form. Your opinion is essential to the outcome of the study.

If you have already sent the questionnaire to us, please ignore this letter. On the other hand, if you have set the questionnaire aside for another day, we urge you to help us by completing it and sending it to us as soon as possible.

As we mentioned before, if the child's mother is not living in the same home as the child, the questionnaire should be answered by the adult family member or guardian who is responsible for him.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Gerald S. Lesser, Ph.D.
Director
Laboratory of Human Development

Richard F. Purnell, Ph.D.
Research Associate

GSL:pac

HARVARD UNIVERSITY
GRADUATE SCHOOL OF EDUCATION

LABORATORY OF HUMAN DEVELOPMENT

ROY E. LARSEN HALL, APPIAN WAY
CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS 02138

April, 1967

Dear Mother:

Some time ago we sent you a questionnaire and requested your help as part of a research study of selected high schools throughout the U.S. Questionnaires were sent to the mothers of all students in the high school your child is attending.

Many questionnaires have been returned to us. To be fully valuable it is essential that we have the cooperation of everyone involved so that our results will represent all parents and all opinions. All information is, of course, confidential and will be reported only in statistical form. Your opinion is essential to the outcome of the study.

In case you have misplaced the original questionnaire, we are enclosing another one and a stamped return envelope. Won't you please help us and return the completed questionnaire to us.

As we mentioned before, if the child's mother is not living in the same home as the child, the questionnaire should be answered by the adult family member or guardian who is responsible for him.

Thank you very much for your time and cooperation.

Sincerely,

Gerald S. Lesser, Ph.D.
Director
Laboratory of Human Development

Richard F. Purnell, Ph.D.
Research Associate

GSL:shb
Enc.